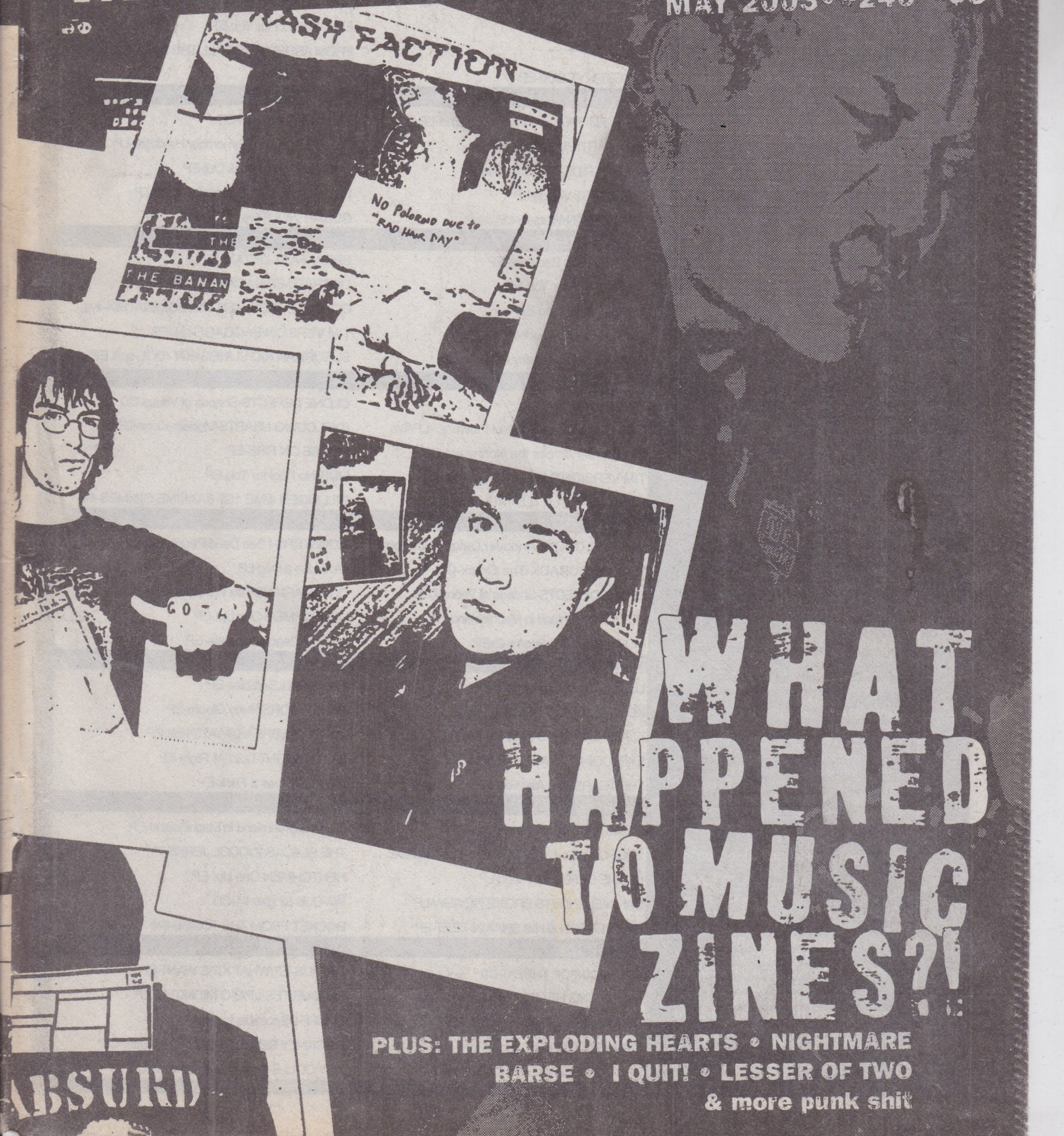
MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

MAY 2003 • #240 • $3



WHAT HAPPENED TO MUSIC ZINES?!

PLUS: THE EXPLODING HEARTS • NIGHTMARE BARSE • I QUIT! • LESSER OF TWO & more punk shit

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

For what it's worth (not much), here's some of the MRR crew's current Top 10 (or so...) lists of stuff we review.

TIM BROOKS

- CLONE DEFECTS-Shapes of Venus-CD
- HOUSE ON FIRE-EP
- BREAKFAST-Vertigo-LP
- MC5-LP
- ASBEST-NYT Blod-EP
- CROW/ARTIMUS PYLE-EP
- EXPLODING HEARTS-Modern Kicks-EP
- LIDS-No Fool for You-EP
- FROM ASHES RISE/CALL THE POLICE-live
- OUR TURN-live

ROB COONS

- KUNG FU RICK-Coming to an End-LP
- CROW/ARTIMUS PYLE-EP
- NAILBITER/DESTRUCCION-LP
- BREAKFAST-Vertigo-LP
- JOY DIVISION-Warsaw-LP
- SHIKARI-Dead Men-EP
- REGRET-Do You Remember Hardcore-LP
- THE CLIFTONS-Rock Out-EP
- RELIGIOUS WAR-Cracked System-LP
- GUITAR WOLF-live

ARWEN CURRY

- LOADS-Beach Banshee-EP
- LIDS-No Fool for You-EP
- ASBEST-NYT Blod-EP
- F-HOLE-Gives a Fuck-EP
- GOAT SHANTY-Clearly Presp In-EP
- BREAKFAST-LP/TAXI-LP
- LIBERATE-EP/DACKELBLUT-both LPs
- COLORED RICE MEN-LPs/DOMINATRIX-live
- TIM VERSION/BAGGAGE-splitEP
- SUBURBAN KID/SLINGSHOT IDOL-split EP

JONATHAN FLOYD

- TRIGGERS-live
- SWINGIN UTTERS-Dead Flowers..-LP/live
- V/A-Dirtnap Across the Northwest-CD
- TIM VERSION/BAGGAGE-splitEP
- BENNY/BABY LITTLE TABLETS-split EP
- CLONE DEFECTS-Shapes of Venus-CD
- EXPLODING HEARTS-Modern Kicks-EP
- HOUSE ON FIRE-EP
- LIDS-No Fool for You-EP
- DILLINGER 4/ME 1ST & GIMME GIMMES-live

JEFF HEERMANN

- DAN MELCHOIR-Andover,Duluth, London-EP
- THUNDERCRACK-The Crack-CD
- CLONE DEFECTS-Shapes of Venus-CD
- GEEKS-Dreamland in Machineland-EP
- MODEY LEMON-Enemy-2xEP
- MONSTERS-I See Dead People-CD
- TAXI-Like a Dog-LP
- CONTRARIANS-You Will Listen-EP
- HENTCHMEN-One Up!-EP
- LOADS-Beach Banshee-EP

KENNY KAOS

- LOADS-Beach Banshee-EP
- KOWALSKIS/LULABELLES-split EP
- FLASH EXPRESS-Ride the Flash Express-EP
- EXPLODING HEARTS-Modern Kicks-EP
- THE TEARS-She Ain't Right-EP
- THE SKULLS-Babies-EP
- THE SAVIORS-Ruby Gloom-EP
- CARBONA/BREAKAWAYS-split EP
- BIG MIDNIGHT-Doin' All Right-EP
- F-HOLE-Gives a Fuck-EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- MONSTERS-I See Dead People-CD
- VOLT-Couples-12"/CANDY SNATCHERS-live
- CLONE DEFECTS-7" and LP
- DAN MELCHOIR'S BROKE REVIEW-LP
- SKIP JENSON & HIS SHAKIN' FEET-EP
- GEEKS-Dreamland in Machineland-EP
- THE BLACKS-7"/COOL JERKS-7"
- HENTCHMEN-One Up!-EP
- V/A-Bulb Singles #1-CD
- ROCKET FROM THE TOMBS-live

RAY LUJAN

- SOLEA-CD/POP THREAT-CD
- EXPLODING HEARTS-Modern Kicks-EP
- KOWALSKIS/LULABELLES-split EP
- SWINGIN UTTERS-Dead Flowers..-LP
- HOUSE ON FIRE-EP/EPOXIES-live
- CRITICS-EP/WHAT KIDS WANT-EP
- FAVOURITES-LP/BIG MIDNITHE-EP
- SNUFF-Disposable Income-CD
- COCKNEY REJECTS-Out of the Gutter-CD
- TOY DOLLS-Anniversary Anthems-CD

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- US Rate: $3 each, 6 issue sub for $18, **12 issue sub for $30.** In California, send $19.49 for 6 months or $32.55 for 12 months (tax).
- Canada: $4 each (air) or $3 (surface). 6 issue sub for $24 (air) or $18 (surface). (US dollars)
- Mexico: $4.50 each (air) or $5 (surface). 6 issue sub for $27 (air) or $30 (surface).
- Western Europe: $8 each (air) or $4 (surface). 6 issue sub for $48 (air) or $24 (surface).
- Japan, Australia, New Zealand: $9 each (air) or $4.50 (surface). 6 issue sub for $54 (air) or $27 (surface). (US dollars)
- Everywhere else: $8 each (air) or $5.50 (surface). 6 issue sub for $48 (air) or $33 (surface).

Let us know which issue to start with!

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
#148, 150-154, 156-157, 159-163, 166, 168-175, 178-181, 184-211, 213-239 are as stated above in subscription info. See page after next.

DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE:
Scene Reports: continuously, with photos!
Interviews: continuously, with photos!
Ad Reservations: call to make sure.
Ad Copy In (with payment): by 15th of previous month–NO LATER!!!
Issue out: by 2nd week of following month.

★★ AD RATES & SIZES!! ★★
1/6 page: (2 3/8" x 5") $30
1/3 page long: (2 3/8" x 10") $85
1/3 page square: (5" x 4 7/8") $100
1/2 page: (7 1/4" x 5") $150
Full page (7 1/4" x 10") $400

AD CRITERIA:
We will not accept major label or related ads, or ads for comps that include major label bands. We reserve the right to refuse ads for any reason at any time. Send ads on paper, properly sized.

CLASSIFIEDS: NEW PRICE! $2 for a maximum of 40 words. No racist, sexist or fascist material. Send typed if possible.

COVER: Mike Thorn

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Also available from: No Idea, Sound Idea, Revolver, Get Hip, Smash, Subterranean, Last Gasp, See Hear, Armadillo, Ubiquity, Choke Inc, Desert Moon, and Marginal.

See page 5 for foreign distribution info.

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

Please send us records (2 copies of vinyl, if possible--one for MRR and one for reviewer), or CD-only release. See records section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

BOBBY MANIC

- EXPLODING HEARTS-Modern Kicks-EP
- HENTCHMEN-One Up!-EP
- KOWALSKIS/LULABELLES-split EP
- CARBONA/BREAKAWAYS-split EP
- DICKIES-Still Got Live-LP

WILL RISK

- WHAT THE KIDA WANT-EP
- HOUSE ON FIRE-EP
- FUN-10"EP/OMA HANS-LP
- DACKELBLUT-both LPs
- EXPLODING HEARTS-EP/FOURTH ROTOR-live

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

- SHANK-Curse of Shank-CD
- BREAKFAST-Vertigo-LP/NECROS-2XLP
- DACKELBLUT-both LPs/MC5-LP
- IMPRACTICAL COCKPIT-Trashed Is Good-LP
- TELEVISION-The Blow Up-2xLP
- FUN-Speed Like a Hammer-10"
- GRAIN USA-Catchy Like a Cold-EP
- COLORED RICE MEN-LPs
- CROW/ARTIMUS PYLE-EP
- THIS IS MY FIST/FOURTH ROTOR/TED LEO-live

WILLIE NELSON

- DACKELBLUT-LP
- FOURTH ROTOR-live
- ULSTER-Ulsterror-CD
- NCC-10"
- DISCREANTYOUTHHELLCHRISTBASTARDASSMANX-EP
- KUNG FU RICK-LP
- LIBERATE-EP
- RELIGIOUS WAR-LP
- POTOMAC-LP/reviewing records for MRR—it's been fun. Midwest here I come! Thanks.

DONNA POOLE

- TAXI-Like a Dog-LP
- V/A-Drinking About Songs-2xLP
- LOADS-Beach Banshee-EP
- WHAT THE KIDA WANT-EP
- CLONE DEFECTS-Shapes of Venus-EP
- THE TEARS-She Ain't Right-EP
- LIDS-No Fool for You-EP
- F-HOLE-Gives a Fuck-EP
- TRIGGERS-live
- JEWDRIVER-live

BRUCE ROEHRS

- GENERATION 69-EP LES TECKELS-7"
- ANTISEEN-Here to Ruin Your Groove-LP
- CROW/ARTIMUS PYLE-EP
- CRI D'ALERTE-50 CL-EP
- LES POCHES-Tears of Lager-EP
- ANTISEEN-Noise for the Sake of Noise-LP
- LIBERATE-Never Fading Away-EP
- LOURDS 5- Touche Pas A Mon Bock-EP
- KK 44-Un Hospice Pour Crever-EP
- THE BUTTOCKS-Law and Order-LP

MIKE THORN

- ABEST-EP/BREAKFAST-LP
- DACKELBLUT-both LPs
- F-HOLE-Gives a Fuck-EP
- GOOD MORNING/DEATH FIRST-EP
- HK/KGS-EP/HOUSE ON FIRE-EP
- JUNK SCHIZO-EP/SHANK-CD
- NAILBITER/DESTRUCCION-LP
- WITCHHUNT/DEATHBAG-EP
- RELIGIOUS WAR-12"
- DOMINATRIX-live

RYAN WELLS

- ARAB ON RADAR-Stolen Singles-CD
- DIRTY CHARLIE-Hydra-EP
- IMPRACTICAL COCKPIT-Trashed Is Good-LP
- LES TECKELS-I'm Not So Angry-EP
- COOL JERKS-Whole Wide World-EP
- CLONE DEFECTS-Shapes of Venus-EP
- GEEKS-Dreamland in Machineland-EP
- BLOW CHUNKS-Little Suzie-EP
- LIDS-No Fool for You-EP
- VOLT-Couples-12"

ZINE TOP TEN

- Adijo Pamet #9
- Equalizing Distort #3
- Go Metric Winter 02-03
- Imagine #5
- Full Gallop #10
- The Little Black Star #24
- Not-Not #2
- Oakslander #1
- Scanner #13
- Tight Pants/Snakepit

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#148/Sept '95. Soda Jerks, Toe Rag, Thorazine, Sacred Straight, Wizo, Opposition Party, Moody Jackson, Adversives, Opcion Crucial, Rebel, Rebel, Teen Idols, Walking Ruins.

#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#151/Dec '95. Lowdowns, My White Bread Mom, Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/Humanity, Stains, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue.

#152/Jan '96. Delilah Jacks, Battalion of Saints, Bottom Feeders, Turbonegro, Murder Junkies, Junior, Assfort, Retch Records, Com-Fract, Dead End Kids.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#154/Mar '96. Motards, Subincision, Stisism, Donnas, Stallions, Count Backwards.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#157/June '96. Against All Authority, The Criminals, Wardance, Heroines, Brain Brats, Rudiments, Chinese Millionaires, Sons Of Hercules, Your Mother, Yellow Scab.

#159/Aug '96. Smugglers, Brand New Unit, Tone Deaf Pig-Dogs, Round Ear Spocks, David Hayes/Very Small Recs, Man Afraid, Blind Side, Vox Populi, Death Wish Kids, Fun People, Fat Drunk & Stupid.

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q. Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, the Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemtion 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#168/May '97. Cretin 66, Fishsticks, Distemper, Enewetak, UK Subs, Luxo Champ, Jake Sayless, "Pioneers of Punk."

#169/June '97. Hand Skin, Cluster Bomb Unit, Jihad, Purgen, Speed Queens, Remission, Halflings, The Old Man, Deface.

#170/July '97. Bristle, Mine, Tedio Boys, The 4 Cockroaches, Absconded, Meanwhile, Broken, (Young) Pioneers, Hoodrat.

#171/Aug '97. Violent Society, Strychnine, Idiots, Knuckle Heads, Race Traitor, Patrick Grindstaff, Misanthropists.

#172/Sept '97. Withdrawals, Judgement, No Motiv, Oppressed Logic, Truents, Left For Dead, Yellowskin, Weird Lovemakers, Smash Your Face, Flatus, Straight Faced, Klaxon, X-It.

#173/Oct '97. Hot Water Music, Fat Day, Los Tigres Guapos, Les Partisans, Bristols, My 3 Scum, Space Shits, Pessimiser Recs, Reclusives, Nick Qwik.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity, Education theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#178/Mar '98. Economics issue. Forgotten Rebels, Dirtys, Josh Collins, American Steel, Letterbombs, Gyogun Rend's, Go-Devils, Room 41, Tone Deaf Pig Dogs, Garage Rats.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, Stiletto Boys, All Bets Off, Bonecrusher, Summerjack, Cell Bick 5, DDI, Normals, Pirate Radio issue.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Umlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, Third Party, No Class, Skabs.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Comethus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#211/Dec '00. Fly & Seth Tobocman, Anti/Dogmatikss, Hissyfits, Aus Rotten, Media Blitz, Rocks, Hospital Food, Falsies, White Stripes, 9 Shocks Terror, Tijuana Bibles.

#213/Feb '01. Fun People, Onward to Mayhem, Ugly Pop, Midnight Evils, Atrocious Madness, Bread & Water, Josh Peach, Zodiac Killers.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/Apr '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#219/Aug '01. "Fix It!" cycling article, Crucial Unit, Lost Sounds, Lombardies, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 1, Casualties, Resinators, *P.U.N.K.*, Slaughter & the Dogs, Anti-Flag, Dontcares, S'Bitch.

#220/Sep '01. Latin American Issue. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum, Kim Bae Photo Essay.

#221/Oct '01. Tales from the G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#228/May '02. 3 Summers Gone, Haymaker, Killed In Action, 31G, Cheetah Chrome, Stardumb, This Computer Kills, Isso•Keh, Strong Intention, Desobediencia Civil, Caustic Christ, Lack of Knowledge.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Anti-war guest columns. Anti-war scene reports. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, Artcore Fanzine, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#237/Feb '03. Top Ten Records of 2002, "Music as a Weapon: Artists in Wartime," Dirt Bike Annie, Let It Burn, Stockyard Stoics, King Khan & Shrines, 625 Records, Feast Or Famine, Rudimentary Peni, Coachwhips, Self Defense.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. History of Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia Article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

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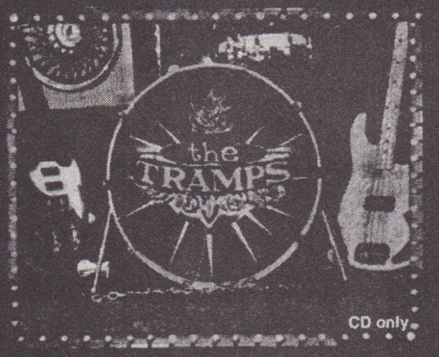

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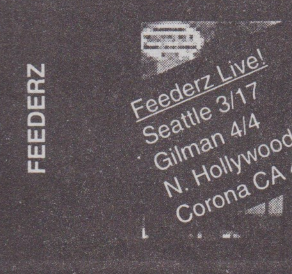

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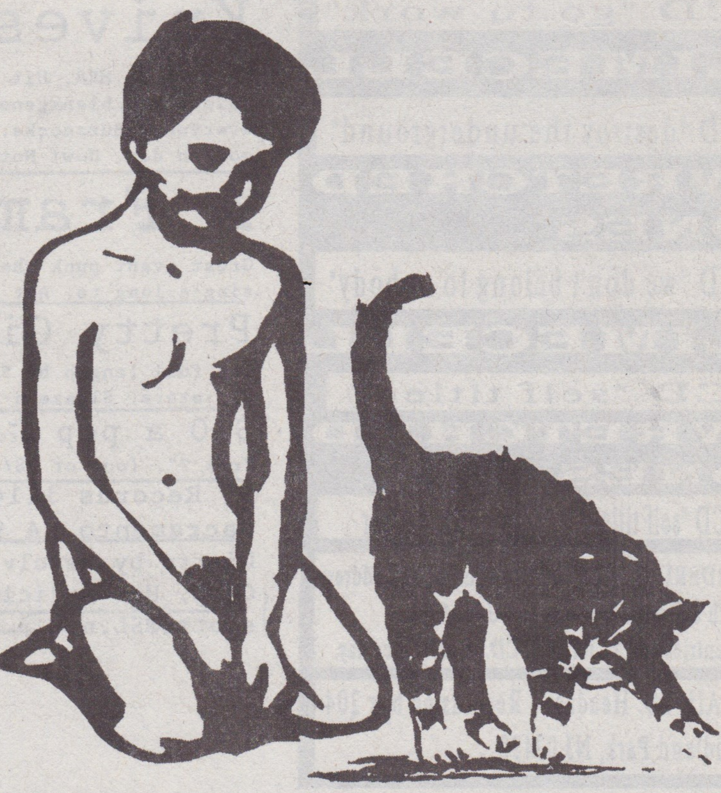

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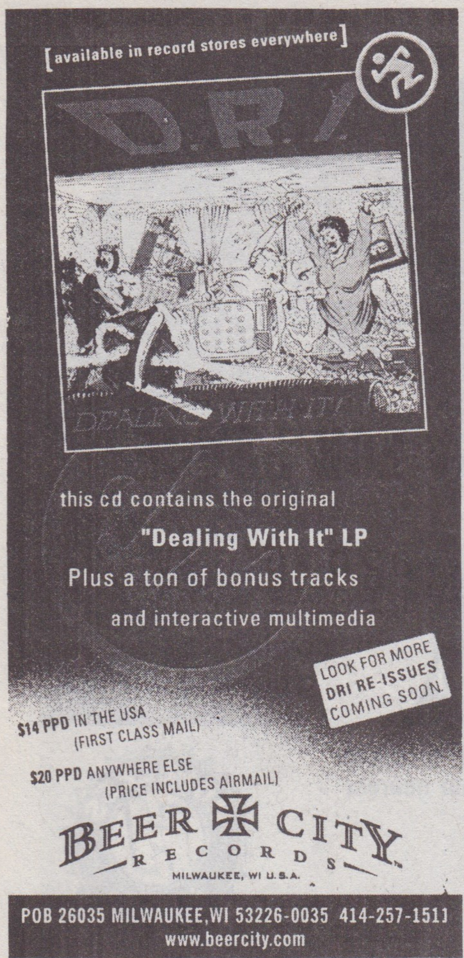
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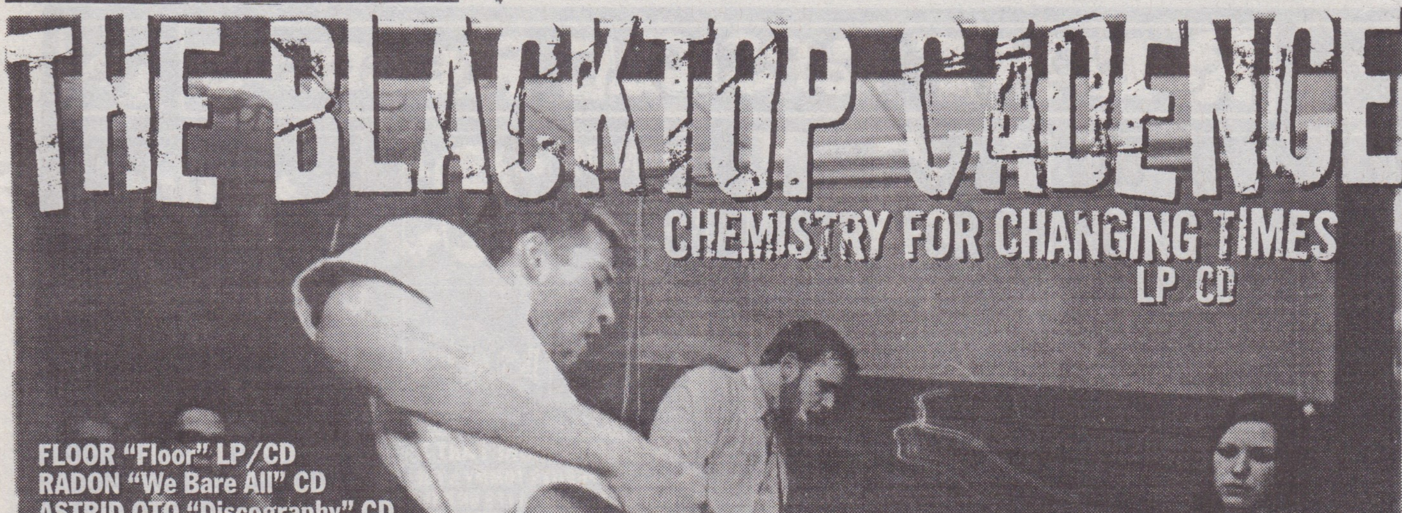
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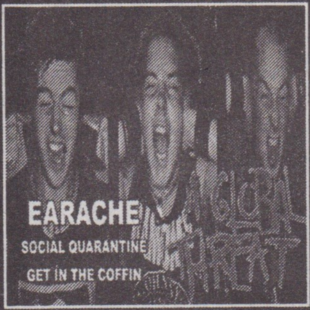

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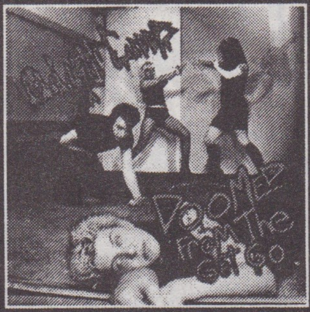

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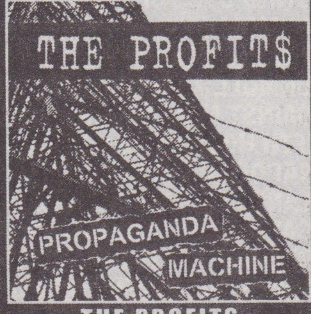

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LETTERS

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MRR-

Well, it's true. We are effectively shut down. Burnt Ramen shows are nada mas! Last night the pigs showed up and made it clear the intentions of the city / fire marshall / pigs that they want Burnt Ramen shut down or forced to fit into a business mold. I refuse to compromise my artistic vision in order to keep the Ramen operating. I live by the code of No Rules, No Signs, and No Restrictions and so therefore will not try to make Burnt Ramen a business that's up to code and respected by the mainstream money minded morons. The recording studio is still in full operation and we are encouraging outside producers to utilize the place. We still have rehearsal space for bands, we just can't do shows anymore. We probably could meet the fire code and probably could have shows as long as people weren't out on the street, during and in between bands, painting graffiti and throwing their trash around. But in order to do that we would have to put up signs, have security, and then if cops did come to check us out and if we weren't ID-ing people and stopping people from smoking, they would still shut us down. The reason Burnt Ramen was great was because it provided a space where musicians could relax and be themselves because there were no rules they had to conform to. So even if we met the regulations and jumped through their hoops the Ramen would never be the same, we would be beating a dead horse and that is not my style. When I first came here I thought I might be able to run shows here for about eight months before getting shut down. Then after a few months I thought I might be able to keep it going for one and a half years at the most. But hey, we ran an illegal underground club for almost three years without compromise. To me that is really successful! I have never gotten away with booking an illegal situation like this for this long. And we recorded and archived everything!

How did we do it for so long? Well, there were many factors involved. First, we owned the building. We kept the cost per show low, and we relentlessly cleaned up after each show (very important factor). We created a non-business atmosphere (didn't sell anything or try to capitalize on the scene). The non-business atmosphere creates a situation where the audience feels like they want to respect the club rather than feeling pissed off at it. People never felt screwed over (as far as I can tell anyway) at least that was our intention. We didn't have shows during the day so as not to raise too much attention. We also had a location close to public transportation and in a really bad neighborhood next to the train tracks (which are louder than the music). Those are some of the main factors that kept us going for so long. And are important factors to consider if you are going to set up an underground venue yerselves. We also operated unlike most clubs by not controlling the bills (line-ups for shows). We gave the contacts and control to the local bands. So anyone that ever booked a show here still retains their contacts and has learned the skills necessary to run their own venues. Often when venues close the scene really takes it hard. This doesn't have to happen with Burnt Ramen closing, because we made sure bands networked with bands and not the venue. Those contacts will always remain (unless yer band breaks up and ya go to college er something). If anyone wants to start a club and wants some advice /support, please feel free to contact me and I'll be available to assist anyone who is willing to do it. Not sure what else to say....I don't really want to end this message cause it really will be the end then and I'm still feeling attached to what was. Soon we will update the website and now I'll have more time available to build the record label and be able to make available the last three years of live recordings. So check back periodically at www.burntramen.com.

Thanks to everyone who has participated in making Burnt Ramen a great place to play and to see live bands. Thanks to all the touring bands that have come through and enjoyed the Ramen. Myk and I are looking for another place to do it all over again. We likely won't be buying a new building or anything but perhaps will be able to create another situation with similar factors. Any suggestions? Email us and we'll check it out. Now I'm going to email all the organizers that have shows booked and inform them of the news. Thanks to everyone for everything.

Peace,

John the Baker

Hi *MRR-*

I was just reading your March issue, and noticed a review for *Koekrand* #95 where you gave Johan's adress. Apparently the sad news hasn't reached you yet. Sadly enough, Friday Feb. the 7th, Johan van Leeuwen passed away (from the effects of brain tumor). He will be sadly missed. I didn't know him personally, but we wrote some letters to each other, and his fanzine and books were always nice to read. I heard that there are still some issues of *Koekrand* that Johan made that will still come out, but I'm not sure. Keep up the good work with *MRR*.

Love, Maarten Punk

Johan published Koekrand *fanzine from 1980 until the time of his death, as well as other DIY publications, and will be missed. Thank you to all who wrote in to let us know. –Anandi*

MRR-

This might be old news, but as of Feb. 20 '03, KBOO, the station I love, won a fight with the FCC. We were charged with indecency, but now they rescinded the $7,000 fine against the station. The whole thing was a big stupid mess of other people judging what is appropriate for the whole listening public. Some dumb old guy (for real, he was an old board member at KBOO) complained a bunch to the FCC about the airing of Sarah

Jones' song, "Your Revolution." "Your Revolution" contains sexually explicit passages that condemn prevalent attitudes about sexual liberty as little more than a license for male sexual conquest. We were fined in May '01, and it stirred up a lot of shit here, but got a lot of people standing up and ready to fight the new FCC commisioner, Michael Powell, son of the general with the bad ideas. Anyway, the FCC explains it's decison by saying that "it was a close call" and that although the song indisputably described sexual activity and had, thus, "warranted scrutiny," it was wrong to have found the song indecent because, "on balance and in context, the sexual descriptions in the song are not sufficiently graphic to warrant sanction." At the same time they went after little old us, they tried to fine KKMG (FM) in Pueblo, Colo., for airing an edited version of Eminem's "The Real Slim Shady:" The FCC ended up throwing out that ruling, too. So, we win. And we keep fighting.
Erin Yanke,
Portland, OR

Hallo-
I have heard that people are writing that Perkele are a white power band in your zine [MRR *#238, letter from Helge/*Plastic Bomb], and I think it's both sad and crazy. Our bass player is dark-skinned and was born in Sri Lanka. I think that it´s totally impossible that we could be a white power band. We have never been in contact with WP stuff and will never be coz it´s total shit! Why not attack the bands who are really WP? There are a lot of them. I hope you understand, If you want to ask something send me a mail. Take care. Ron (Perkele)

Hi *MRR*-
This is Dmitri of the zine "Dead City." Never wrote in before. Never had a reason. Found out today that my address is wrong in the new issue of *Zine Guide.* Got nothing to do with *MRR*, I know, but most people that have asked for a copy have learned about me through your review pages. So, sorry to anyone who has been trying to find me and couldn't. My address is:
Dead City
1484 Niles-Cortland rd
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Still a buck or a trade. I take mix tapes for trades too. Enemies need not write.
P.S. Ups to Maddy Dental for scoring a position as columnist. Am I gonna have to go to New York and wander around to ever see you again?

Hello *MRR*-
First of all, I'd like to say that I think the zine has come a long way in the last few years, and I enjoy every issue. That said, I do have a problem with a record review a couple issues back. The record was the Debris *Ten2* LP, and the reviewer was Dulcinea Loudmouth (DL). I understand that the reviews are the opinions of the reviewer, but it seemed that the review was done by someone who didn't like the style of music, rather than just the record. The main criticisms of the LP were that it was "dry with endless political puke written all over it," and that the band "just wanna sound really tough with heavy guitars and big ugly vocals." Well, the former criticism could well be made of any Crass record, and the latter could describe any crust / grind record that came out in the last thirteen years (Doom, Extreme Noise Terror, Cress, Agathocles, etc) to someone who doesn't dig the style. So I thought I'd send in my own review of the record, written by someone who loves current UK crusty hardcore (and who has no affiliations with the band).
"Debris *Ten2* LP
This new Debris record is a great follow up to the *Attrition* EP that came out on Maximum Voice a couple of years back (which was one of the most underrated records in the last few years). This LP has the crustiness of other great UK bands like Sedition, Disaffect, and Scatha, but the songs are written with a melody that brings Manifesto Jukebox to mind. Melodic crust punk I guess, this LP will kick the shit out of you but make you come back for more. If you are into any of the bands mentioned, then you will love this record."
Well, now readers have the opinion of someone who listens to the record consistently (me), and someone who I'm guessing listened to the first song or two and doesn't like the style of music (DL).
Later, Jordan M

Felix Havoc and *MRR*-
Read the "Fin de Siecle Angst" column in the Feb. issue and am overjoyed that other people feel like I do about CDs, still. Now, I'm not coming to this from a distro or sales perspective, just a listener's one. I'd like to reinstate the position of many vinyl snobs: CDs were, and still are, completely bogus. I'm currently co-making a documentary on analog vs. digital technology and audio plays a large part in it-hell, it's mainly about audio. Interviewing some of the people like engineers and audiophiles, it becomes clearer and clearer why CDs are (still!) a scam.
Sony introduced the technology to a panicking music industry as a way to increase profits (ho-fucking-hum, eh?) and to reissue entire back catalogues that had been all but collecting dust and forgotten about. This was clearly the reason; it certainly did not have anything to do with sound quality, and some Sony engineers would readily admit during the trial phase (only to other industry folk, though). Remember, the music industry was hitting hard times in the 80s, and they desperately needed something to pump-prime its sales. CDs were the perfect answer: cheaper to manufacture, they were marketed to folks as a way to replace that dusty old LP collection, and, indeed (sadly), many people went happily down that route. I personally know one guy who owned hundreds and hundreds of irreplaceable, classic jazz LPs (many of which *still* haven't been reissued on compact disc) who sold them all for a pittance to a local used record store and began to build a CD library. Of course, he still hasn't replaced all of them, and, if you remember, those early CDs sounded like shit! This was before engineers figured out how to mix for the CD format so it wouldn't sound so embarrassing. At any rate, guess who wins and who loses? I don't even have to bore anyone here with the details. I still fucking hate the format. Don't get me wrong, I own some CDs; they're the only way to get to hear some stuff. But I still hate it. I buy vinyl whenever I can. And, guess what? Once again, the music industry is in dire straits, and there's no light at the end of the tunnel (especially these days). To quote Jello Biafra, maybe they put out one too many lousy records! Another thing, it's difficult to sell enough albums to keep monster, top-heavy corporations like the big labels afloat. Structurally, it kinda works, but for whom? At any rate, folks, I know this is a rant, and for those who've read this far, thanks. I'm in the midst of an argument with a band-mate about this very topic—he wants to put out our EP (when we fucking finish it, that is) on CD format, so

that more people will be able to listen to it (whine). My response is: if you don't have a turntable and you're a fan of punk/HC, what the fuck's your problem?

One more thing: I've been hearing more and more from people like engineers and the like that the CD is not a format that'll be with us that long–it's a transitional format, and when it goes, they'll have another slap-happy time shoving yet another medium and a whole new plethora of equipment down our throats. Yummy!

Enough. Thanks, Felix Havoc, and thanks all those bands / labels / distros / fans who still support vinyl.

Hans Michaud, Brooklyn, NY

Dear *MRR* and readers-

Imagine my surprise when I opened the Apr. (#239) issue of *MRR* only to see a column I submitted printed as that month's prisoner column! And I only just submitted it something like fourteen months ago! Firstly, to any readers interested in writing in response to the Apr. prisoner column, my address has since changed. My address now is at the end of this letter. Secondly, what is up with that!? Mike, Arwen, or whoever it is that determines when a submission gets printed, I had thought it wasn't going to be printed. It certainly can't be because you are getting a glut of submissions for prisoner columns because I've noticed that you only print one every two or three issues. Did someone let it slip behind a desk or something? Tsk, tsk, very sloppy indeed. What really threw me was that I had just sent a different column in for you to print about two or three weeks ago maybe, and when I flipped to the columns section of the Apr. issue to see if there was a prisoner column, I saw my name. Imagine my surprise when I actually read what was written! Well, nevertheless, I am glad that you finally did print that column. I was really proud of that one. I had mostly forgotten about it, and I must say, in all modesty: I was in rare form that day. Y'all take care now, ya hear, and come back and see us again sometime.

No gods, no masters,

Jim

James Duane #214699
Macomb Correctional Facility
34625 26 Mile Road
New Haven, MI 48048

Jim,

All right, all right, I get it. It's true what you say, and it's pretty much my fault. I started holding back the prisoner's columns when it became clear they were always going to be sent in by the same four or five dudes (you, Jim, are one of those dudes!) I had hopes that over time we would begin to see a greater variety of submissions, but it was not to be. Then, still thinking the column a good idea, I decided, well, better the same four dudes than nobody at all. Going back over the columns, I tried to select those that still seemed relevant, assuming folks would rather them be printed later than never (in your case, it appears I was right!) It's true, I should probably check back in with people after a certain amount of time has eleapsed. In any case, I should exhaust my backlog and be back in the present day before too long. While we're on the topic, it would be great if more incarcerated punks would consider sending in columns. Especially women—we've never received a prisoner column from a woman, and I'd love that to change.

—Arwen

Dear *MRR*-

This letter goes out to Bruce Roehrs and any other Confederacy of Scum dumb fucks out there. I don't really get to read your magazine that much because there's nowhere to buy it in Chattanooga TN. Yes, Chattanooga TN, the home of the Confederacy of Scum. I thought *MRR* didn't review homophobic, sexist, or racist bands. All these bands from the Confederacy of Scum from Chattanooga (as in Hellstomper) can't even get a show anywhere, not even a basement punk rock show. Do you know why?! They are racist bigot piles of shit!!! You find these assholes at the flea market selling swastika patches. I'm fucking serious! Alan "the goddamn" King (singer of Hellstomper) used to have a store and no one would buy a thing from him. Why? Because he's a racist piece of shit!

I think it should be known that these people and bands are racist and *MRR* has a top ten section praising music from a bunch of redneck, trailer park, raping, gun toting, "nigger"-sayin', ignorant shits. Half these bands are on TKO (a skinhead label) now. It's even more of a mindfuck to me that skinheads are putting out records by racist bands and getting away with it. It's probably a white power conspiracy, or maybe I'm just paranoid. "But it's funny," you might say, "a bunch of rednecks playing country songs by Hank jr., George Jones, GG Allin even. Hilarious! Rednecks and punk rock. Ha!" Fuck you. I've heard Skrewdriver's first album isn't racist. That doesn't mean I'm gonna listen to it! Charlie Daniels is a "reformed" racist and burns his racist albums on stage but I'm sure he's still a sexist, homophobic, good ole boy. The worst thing (besides being a rapist) GG Allin ever did was breed a life form for these people. Fuck Antiseen, fuck Cocknoose, fuck Limecell, fuck the Confederacy of Scum. The civil war's long over and we lost cowboys, get over it. Confederacy of Scum are scared to show their faces in their own town. And I thought they were supposed to be some tough motherfuckers! Ha!

This Here motherfuckers!

Josh M.

Queerwulf

Josh,

Well, you're not going to get any "hey man, loosen up"s from this camp. But once again, let's go over the MRR *review policy, which is not necessarily intuitive.* MRR *does, in fact, review racist, sexist, homophopic, and nationalist bands—as long as musically, they are punk, and as long as they are put out on independent labels. When we encounter this shit, we call it out in the review, and omit the address so you can't mailorder. The reasoning here is that we want comprehensive coverage of all (underground) punk music—that way, if a kid hears about some dodgy band, or sees their record in the bins, they'll have a heads-up as to their bullshit politics. Celebrating their bullshit politics, like in a top ten, is another thing entirely, and not at all the point of this policy.*

Here's the tricky thing about responding to your letter—we have to make these judgement calls based on the lyrical content of the songs or sometimes packaging. If a band sings about hating towelheads or beating up bitches, the issue is simple. But what if they're racist, sexist fuckheads in daily life but it doesn't show up on the records? How can we quantify that, and whose word should we take? As golden as I'm sure yours is, it would be a dangerous precedent.

Most of the bands you mention have been sending us only CDs recently, which puts Mike and me in a difficult spot for this discussion, logistically—because of the way CDs are assigned, most of them slip past our radar, meaning we never see the lyrics. We'll keep a closer eye on them in the future—we really don't want to be waving flags for rapists and violent thugs. It wouldn't be the first time Bruce has "overlooked the politics" and drooled over

records that make me cringe. It's a problem, and as I say, we'll try to be more vigilant about it in the future.
Thanks for the letter.
—Arwen

Hey *MRR*-
I'm writing in response to John Fox from Portland, Oregon (Feb. '03) who seems to hate punx. Well, I don't know who he is to judge me! I consider myself punk. I may wear clothes for a couple of days in a row and hardly wash my pants, but I don't smell. And I have a great career ahead of me; I am going to be a humane law enforcement officer, an Animal Cruelty Officer. If you don't know what that is, watch Animal Precinct on *Animal Planet*. My two best friends are into heavy metal. One likes punk more than the other one. I also have friends who listen to rap. The reason I don't listen to rap is it sucks and I don't want to support them. Rappers usually wear clothes, accessories, etc, like Nike, that are manufactured from the third world scene (child labor), which I am against. And almost every rap song I have heard is about some sexual activity or drugs. I don't shop at Hot Topic. I buy my clothes from Goodwill. I order things like patches, chokers, music, etc, from record companies and stores. Hot Topic is too expensive, and I hardly ever have any money. I do what I want, try to help other people, and try not to be selfish. Which to me, is pretty punk.
I have something to say to Danny in Liverpool, too. I totally agree with you in saying, "how punk are computers, anyway?" I hate computers and technology. Living in a society where computers partially control the world, it makes it more difficult to live. But it is possible. The internet makes it easier to get things and sometimes email is the only or best way you can get in contact with someone because they are so busy.
Last but not least, I would like to mention something else. I don't know if it was mentioned in *MRR* or any readers heard about it, but back in Dec. '97, a really cool punk, Brian Deneke, was purposely run over by a jock and died instantly. The killer got 10 years probation and a $100,000 bail, no jail time. Just because he was a punk. Brian seemed to have been really cool and nice. He helped people and loved animals. Even though I never met him, and don't have anything to do with this, I thoght I'd mention it. There is a Brian Deneke committee to help encourage tolerance, dialogue, and civilized respect for different lifestyles and perspectives. Donations can be made to help create a memorial park in Brian's memory, for a scholarship fund, homeless shelter, and more. For more info, visit www.briandeneke.org (sorry Danny). I hope no one minds that I mentioned this. Please help if you can.
Love always, Kristina.
Norwich, CT
P.S. George Tabb, I love your column.

Hey *MRR*-
I have recently started a public access TV show about the punk rock and activist community. The show has live show footage, interviews with bands, labels, and activist groups and other assorted nonsense. I will be going on tour to Europe in May and I'm looking for bands, labels, etc, for interviews. If you are a punk, hardcore, indie rock band or label and would be interested in doing a TV interview, please get in touch. For those of you who are in the states, if you are interested in contributing to the show or getting the show on your local public access, please email me:
ridebikesboston@aol.com
or use snail mail. Thanks a lot!
Matt/ Death Before Disco
19 Goldsmith st.
Littleton MA 01460

Hello-
I've been reading *MRR* for the longest time now and I still like the zine a lot. There's one thing bothering me though; you seem to like Stardumb and the Apers a lot. I come from the Apers hometown and I can honestly say we know better here! The Apers take every oppurtunity they get to vent their disgust about the so-called "real" punk scene in the Dutch media. (No, they won't do that in *MRR*, that would be bad for business!!) To them the DIY scene is just a remnant of the past. They keep on talking about how badly produced most punk rock records are and how most artwork is cheap and looks bad. Well, if I had a band member working at a printing plant who could make full color flyers for the cost of the ink and paper, I wouldn't use cheap photocopied black and white flyers either. And I sure would spend two weeks in a good studio to record my album if I had the money for it. If you saw the kind of media attention Stardumb seeks over here you wouldn't want to have anything to do with them. To a lot of you folks a person like Jello Biafra is nothing more then a rock star but I think the Apers are a lot worse in that aspect. Kevin Aper is going to have a mock wedding in Las Vegas with a Dutch rock singer called Ellen ten Damme. The Dutch media are full of that thing; it's such a stupid publicity stunt. Apers video clips are offered to commercial MTV like stations like the Box, and they spam their "fans" to call that station (for 70 eurocents a call) to ask them to play their record. It goes on and on like that. How people conduct their business is their own choice, but the Apers clearly use a double standard. They pretend to be DIY to the DIY scene and meanwhile they seek mainstream media attention in a way that really sickens me. Stardumb, to me, doesn't represent the Dutch scene in any way!!
Leen Steen

Hello *MRR* and *MRR* readers-
I'm writing this letter in reply to Karl Bakla's letter in the Feb. '03 issue of *Maximum*. I run a small DIY distro in Las Vegas, NV called Panic Inc. Karl emailed me saying he ordered a record and was waiting for it for two months. I emailed back saying, "I never received the letter, but I'll send it for free. I just need your address." About a month went by and I started getting numerous hate mails with no address. I replied, saying, "I still have no address!" and gave him my phone number, address, and email. Karl never called. Months went by and I read his letter in *MRR* about how I am/ Panic Inc. is a rip off. It is very upsetting that it has come down to this. He has talked to some of my friends and could have got my contact info, but instead he talked shit. Now he is writing to make me look bad worldwide. That sucks!
Karl Bakla, I want to resolve this problem. I have a package with your name on it, but cannot send with no address. Until then I remain helpless.
Larry B./ Panic Inc.
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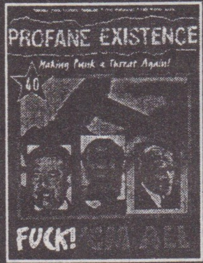

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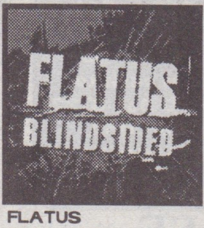

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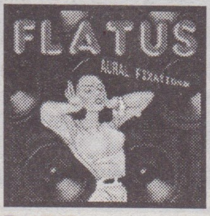

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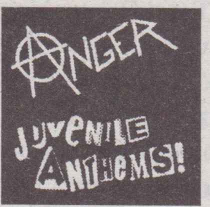

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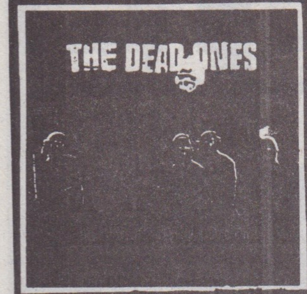

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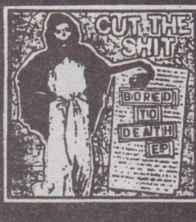

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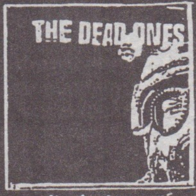

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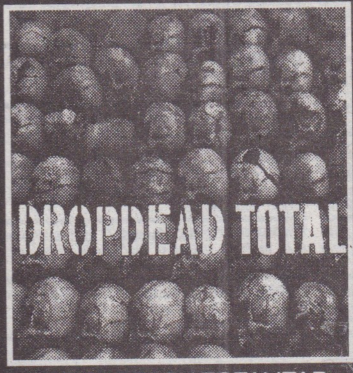

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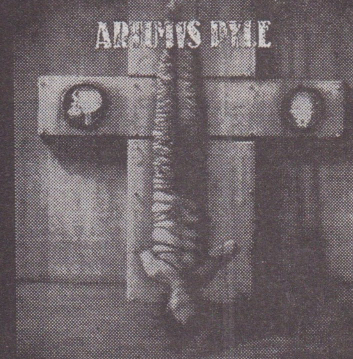

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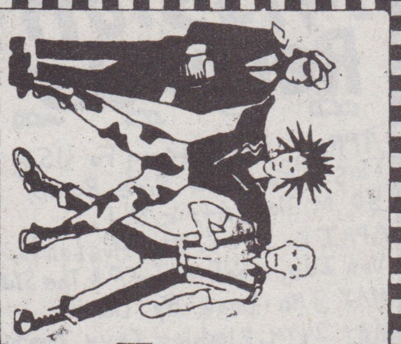

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CAUSTIC CHRIST S/T Two guys from Aus Rotten, 1 from React and 1 from Submachine combine to create a new hardcore powerhouse. Combining the stylings of early Corrosion of Conformity with faster Swedish hardcore resulting in a manic HC sound. **HC 7028**

RIISTETYT Tervetuola Kuolema One of the great Finnish hardcore bands of the 80s returns. No weak rehash here, full on hard driving Finnish style hardcore that put Tampere on the map! Licensed from Fight Records, remixed with a bonus track! **HC 7027**

IDENTITY PARADE: PHOTOGRAPHS BY KRISTOFER PASANEN, 1995–2000 150 Pages, Black & White, Hardcover Havoc records is proud to present our first effort at publishing. Kristofer Pasanen has compiled an amazing book of his live photographs of bands taken over the last five years. Hundreds of bands are photographed from Crust to SE to Emo; see the website for a complete list. **HC-IDP [BOOK]**

SKITSYSTEM Enkel Resa Till Rännstenen Second LP from the masters of dark Swedish hardcore. Heavy and brutal b-beat mixed with crusty HC and thrash styles. A pulverizing steamroller of Swedish hardcore. Split release with No Tolerance Records of Sweden. **LP HC1205 ☠ CD HC5005**

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MISERY The Early Years Incl. the Born, Fed, Slaughtered, Blindead, and Children of War 7"s, the Misery side of the split LP with SDS, and the Production Through Destruction LP. 71 Minutes of Amebix style apocalyptic crust. Split release with Crimes Against Humanity Records. **CD HC5004**

HOLDING ON Just Another Day LP / CD Crucial hardcore from Minnesota's Holding On! Mixes the crunch of Judge and Chain of Strength with the anger and raw power of Negative Approach. Totally pissed off, raw, powerful Hardcore! Split release with THD, Havoc and 1% records. **LP HC1203 ☠ CD HC5003**

DS•13 Killed by the Kids One of the best bands in hardcore today. Amazing second LP of early 80s-style thrash/ HC/ punk. Excellent production, Pushead cover art. **LP HC1202 ☠ CD HC5002**

VARIOUS ARTISTS When Hell Freezes Over Compilation LP Featuring Code 13, Misery, Dreadnaught, Onward To Mayhem, Arden Chapman, Segue, Feed the Machine, Scorned, Calloused, Fallen Graces, & Pontius Pilate. All new material by 11 Minneapolis punk/ HC bands. Styles vary from street punk, to crust, to grind, but it's all punk and all Minneapolis. Split release between Havoc, Sin Fronteras, and local bands. **HC1201**

CODE 13 Complete Discography 1994–2000 All the 7"s and comp tracks with one unreleased song. **CD HC5001**

ASSEMBLY OF GOD Submission Obedience Denial New band with members of Brother Inferior, Burnpile, and Subsanity. Fast punk/HC a lot like the later Brother Inferior material. **HC7026**

VITAMIN X People that Bleed Third 7" by this Dutch SEHC band. Fast HC sound similar to DS-13 or Life's Halt. Great political SE lyrics and high energy HC. **HC7025**

TEAR IT UP S/T Ex Dead Nation, killer fast hardcore with lots of drive and energy. **HC7024**

DS•13 / CODE 13 13 song split 7" Sweden and Minnesota united in fast, raw hardcore pride. **HC7023**

REAL ENEMY / HOLDING ON Twin Cities Hardcore split 7" Political straight edge and youth crew hardcore. **HC7022.5**

NINE SHOCKS TERROR Mobile Terror Unit 7" EP Awesome raw fast thrash from Cleveland. **HC7022**

KAAOS Nukke Re-issue 1985 Finnish HC, classic stuff. **HC7021**

CLUSTERBOMBUNIT...and the Dirty Little Weapons 7" EP Brutal dis-core from Stuttgart, Germany. **HC7020**

UNITED SUPERVILLAINS (USV) Escapist 7" EP crucial fast HC similar to old Boston bands like DYS, Siege and SSD full speed ahead! **HC7019**

SPAZM 151 S/T 7" EP Second 7" by this Texas HC powerhouse. Hardcore like Black Flag, Poison Idea or Battalion of Saints. **HC7018**

DEMON SYSTEM 13 Aborted Teen Generation 7" EP U.S. press of this amazing Swedish hardcore band, fast aggressive powerful old-school hardcore. **HC7017**

CODE-13 A Part Of America Died Today 7" EP Third and best EP from Minnesota thrash punk defenders of the faith–twelve songs. **HC7016**

TAMPERE SS Kuolutt & Kuopattu 7" EP Demo and comp tracks from this crucial Finnish hardcore band of the early 80s. **HC7015**

TAMPERE SS SS Sotaa 7" EP More incredible Finnish thrash hardcore first released in '83. **HC7014**

NOTA/BROTHER INFERIOR split 7" Tulsa, Oklahoma's best hardcore old and new. **HC7013**

PROTESTI S/T 8 track EP Originally released as a demo in 1983, this is Finnish HC in the classic Propaganda Records style. **HC7012**

HEIST Pain Is Causing Life 7" EP Wicked fast and brutal HC in the Infest tradition. Second EP by this Australian thrash outfit. **HC7011**

DISTRAUGHT S/T 7" EP Brutal heavy hard-core from Brooklyn, NYC. New remixed second press with bonus track. **HC7010**

MURDERERS S/T 7" EP Legendary chaos punk/ HC. Manic HC-punk like Disorder, much more thrash than their recent stuff. **HC7009**

CODE-13 They Made a Wasteland and Called it Peace Furious hardcore punk from beneath the streets of Minneapolis. **HC 7008**

H-100'S Texas Death Match 7" Snotty, harsh, early 80s hardcore with a seriously bad attitude. 3/4 of Nine Shocks Terror. **HC 7007**

MASSKONTROLL Warpath 7" EP Brutal Swedish-style hardcore similar to No Security, Doom, etc. ex-Resist, pre-Detestation. **HC7006**

CODE-13 Doomed Society 7" EP Blistering hardcore punk. Ex-Destroy but more of a punk/HC sound than full-on grind. **HC7005**

BRISTLE System 7" EP Rip roaring old school punk/HC from Seattle, powerful and catchy. **HC7004**

AUSROTTEN Fuck Nazi Sympathy 7" EP All-out punk attack similar to Varukers, Discharge, Conflict. **HC7003**

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE In a Few Hours of Madness 7" EP Diverse political punk, similar to Conflict at their peak. **HC7002**

DESTROY Burn this Racist System Down 7" EP Raging political hard-core in the vein of Doom, ENT, Disrupt. Our first release, from 1992. **HC 7001**

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COLUMNS

Mykel Board sez:

YOU'RE WRONG!

It's funnier than a priest with jock itch. 100,000 people protest the coming invasion of Iraq. Traffic stopped for blocks. Cops everywhere. They arrest a few protesters, mostly for conduct less disorderly than the average pizza delivery man.

"The 60s are coming back," shouts an old Yippie, his drooping grey mustache moving with the words. He holds a sign that says, *"No War in Iraq and Legalize Marijuana."* Presumably, if people are stoned enough, they won't have the energy to bomb Iraq. Nah, that's not it, for this guy, *everything* is *"and Legalize Marijuana."*

[My fantasy: the Bleecker Street yippie commune is on fire. Someone tosses a lit roach into a pile of JFK conspiracy books. Seeing the fire, head Yippie dials 911.

"Our house is on fire," he says, "and legalize marijuana."]

For this demonstration, every old fart comes out of the bowels of academia. Every settled SDSer, Green Peacer, and Nader-voter scampers to the UN. They're nice. No Battle of Seattle. No Weather Underground. That doesn't work.

Oh no. These are ordinary folks against the war. They listen to Al Sharpton talk about how Saddam is really evil, but there are other ways of dealing with him. We need to give the UN a chance before we attack. They listen to Harry Belafonte, who doesn't say much except Peace Peace Peace.

They listen to Pete Seeger and Angela Davis... Excuse me? What year is this?

I'd like to say that because there are 100,000 people, there are 100,000 reasons for being there. But it ain't true. There are maybe half a dozen reasons. No more.

First, a few people just don't want the invasion. They may or may not be against war in general, but they don't want King George to invade and murder in another country. They especially don't like us attacking a country that hasn't done anything to anyone else, at least not since the last war. This is the sincere group.

Those three people stand quietly, close to the UN. They don't say anything. They just hold a sign that says NO INVASION.

What motivates the largest group is the same force that compels people to buy Nikes or drive SUVs: *everyone else is doing it.* Is there a greater expression of conformity than a mass demonstration? Maybe piercing, but that's about it.

"Mommy, can I go to the demonstration? Johnny is going. Suzie is going. Everybody's doing it. Can I please? *Please!"*

The night after the demo, I go to a poetry reading. (I have no shame.)

Before it starts, the MC asks, "How many people went to the demo yesterday? Come on, let's see a show of hands."

A dozen hands go up. These are adults. Raising their hands to show they did good... like everybody else.

"That's great," says the MC, "now don't forget to check out the website. That's poetsagainstwar—all one word—dot org dot UK."

There is a smattering of applause and a general mumble of "I meant to go. All my friends went, but I had a dentist's appointment."

Why else do people go? Well, there are the WAR PLUS people. Like the Yippies with legalize marijuana. Every group with "a program" shows up with STOP WAR attached to it.

STOP WAR and END RACISM. STOP WAR and SUPPORT ANIMAL RIGHTS. STOP WAR and KEEP ABORTION LEGAL. STOP WAR and FIGHT GLOBALIZATION. STOP WAR and EAT BEN & JERRY'S ICE CREAM.

Everybody who has something to promote, promotes it. Everyone who has something to advertise, advertises it. Everyone who has something to complain about, complains about it.

What I don't see are anti-war protesters with balls. Everyone is so polite. So non-violent. So "give the UN a chance." It makes me sick. No wonder the press pays no attention. It's not a media conspiracy. The protests are *boring*.

Where are the broken windows, the overturned cars, the *bring the war home* folks? How come Al-Qaeda has to do all the messy work? Where are those who support the war... but the other side?

During the Vietnam War, the supporters of the Vietcong made their positions known.

"Ho Ho Ho Chi Minh, the NLF is gonna win," they chanted.

Where are the Saddam supporters? Where are the people to say, "He stands up to America. His countrymen love him." Where are the chants:

"Sad Sad Saddam Hussein, an Iraqi win they're gonna gain."

I know it doesn't have the Ho Ho Ho Chi Minh ring... and it loses the ironic Christmas connection, but it's better than nothing.

Where is the humor, the irony, the fun? During Vietnam War demonstrations, people dressed up like giant detergent boxes. They promised to put LSD in the drinking water. People wore Santa Claus costumes and went into Macy's. There, they gave toys to little children. Imagine the chaos, crying, and hatred coming from the little kids when the store personnel had to rip the "presents" out of their hands.

"But Santa gave it to me!" bawled the children.

"That wasn't Santa," said the store people. "That was a bad man."

The demonstration against the Iraqi war has as much humor as a night of C-Span. Where's the laughter that made Vietnam?

Ah, Vietnam, the last of the reasons for the protest. How many years have baby boomer parents waned nostalgic about the good old days? How many years have Generation X, Y, and Z heard stories of college days filled with protest signs, sit-ins, teach-ins, and draft-car burnings. Ah, what a wonderful time it must have been. What a shame you'll never see it... But wait! Here it is. YOUR CHANCE to do all that. YOUR CHANCE for candle-light vigils, arm-in-arm marching. Just like mom and dad.

Most likely, by the time you read this, the war will have already started. It might even be over. As I write, the Iraqis are in the latest round of "we'll do anything to prevent war." George W and pals are in *their* last round of "they'll *say* anything to prevent war."

Meanwhile, the US masses troops in the two or three countries that allow massing. We're ready. America loves war. Every president wants one of his own. (Except Jimmy Carter, who should get the Nobel prize... Whoops, who *got* the Nobel prize. He doesn't count. Americans hate him.)

But even if the war is over, I want to get my two yen in. Instead of explaining what's wrong with the war, I want explain why I'm for it, why I'm PRO-WAR.

First, and least profound, airfares are gonna plummet faster than the Twin Towers' upper floors. Americans are such cattle, they panic at the slightest threat. Whose gonna fly when those missiles are flying? I will. NY to London $30? I'll take that. I'll go for a weekend and the beer. A week in Thailand, $150 from New York? I'm there.

Second, unlike most wars, this one will hurt the stock market. Sure, General Electric and other war stocks might get a little boost. For the most part, though, people don't think much of a

global economy on fire.

A lowering stock market will hurt Republicans. Half the Republican base is business. (The other half is religion, but that's another column.) When the average Joe spends his income on duct tape, not a new SUV, business hurts. When business hurts, Republicans hurt.

Speaking of SUVs, the third reason I support the war is that gas prices are gonna rise. It's February 28, and here in NY gas is $2.00 a gallon. The morning news showed a man-in-the-car interview with an SUV owner. He says he's gonna switch to a four cylinder. It wouldn't surprise me to see more bikes on city streets. Less gas means cleaner air. War is good for your lungs.

A fourth reason I support the war is that it gives the government something to do. Idle hands are the Christians' workshop. How many wars against porn would there be with no war against Iraq?

Batteries Not Included reports that the government arrested the first porn-maker on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted list. The other list members include a man who killed two girlfriends. Two others are there for some combination of drugs and murder. There's one mafioso, who "loves animals and may frequent animal shelters." There's a wife/child murderer, a $7 million robber, an abortion clinic bomber, a cop killer, and Osama Bin Laden. I didn't know the FBI most wants people other than Americans. I guess they're branching out.

With a war coming, I expect that we'll see lots more swarthy... er... Mid-East types on that list. That'll buy a few months grace for the pornsters.

A fifth reason I support the war is that it brings back rebellion. It was getting tough for awhile. What was there to be against? The erosion of civil liberties? I tried that. Nobody cares. But war? Ah, that's a big deal. If you're against it, you become a traitor, an outsider, one of *them*. It's an easy way to assert your identity, be rebellious, and get in good with the rebel girls.

And girls... and boys... are the final reason I support the war. During Vietnam, people fucked like there was no tomorrow. We all believed we either would roast in a nuclear holocaust, or there would be bliss in THE REVOLUTION. During the 80s and 90s that feeling died out. Even though we've had a few wars, nobody was frightened by them. They were wars OUT THERE. Only THE ENEMY was affected. Them, and a few soldiers who don't count because they volunteered.

Now we've got THE BOMB again. Iraq has it, if you believe. A few days ago the *NY Times* said Iran also had nuclear weapons. Along with North Korea, that makes the whole "axis of evil."

Why care about herpes if you're gonna die in a nuclear fireball? Let's enjoy ourselves while we can.

ENDNOTES: [*Visitors to my website: mykelboard.com or subscribers (email to: god@mykelboard.com) will receive a few extra endnotes. There are just too many to keep up with.*]

-->*You shudda known dept:* Of course, last month's column about *MRR* becoming MHH was a lie. My usual April Fool's column. All the endnotes, however, no matter how bizarre, are true. Believe them.

-->*Left out dept:* The (true) story in last month's endnotes on: The Northeast Regional Child Exploitation Task Force, was from a column by David Steinberg. He was rightfully pissed that I didn't give him credit.

"I just like seeing my name in your column," says David.

I say, "fair enough."

I also say: David Steinberg. David Steinberg. David Steinberg. David Steinberg. David Steinberg. David Steinberg. David Steinberg. David Steinberg. David Steinberg. David Steinberg. David Steinberg. David Steinberg. David Steinberg. David Steinberg. David Steinberg. David Steinberg.

I hope that buys me forgiveness for my sin of omission.

In any case, you can (and should) subscribe to David's email sex columns. Sending a request to: eronat@aol.com. He's smarter than a slap in the face.

-->*Did I mention this? one dept:* I know I wrote about the Salt Lake City Public library. They buy zines, any zine "as long as it's legal." Send 'em your latest (and back!) issues. They'll pay. *But,* they don't buy books or comics and they don't like newsprint. (I don't know why. Ask 'em!)

That stuff you can send to The Independent Publishing Resource Center, 917 SW Oak St. Suite 218, Portland, OR 7205. They don't pay, but they do say your pub "will be catalogued, on the shelves and available to the general public," which is better than that lump still in the box, right?

--> Kesha sent me a list of fun facts. Two of 'em caught my attention:

1. If you yell for 8 years, 7 months and 6 days, you will produce enough sound energy to heat one cup of coffee.

I say, once that happens, the heated coffee would spill on someone. They'd sue, and for the next 8 years, 7 months and 6 days, conservatives will use that suit as an example of why people shouldn't be allowed to sue.

2. A pig's orgasm lasts for 30 minutes.

I say, it's just another example of G-d's cruelty. Imagine the ability to have 30 minute orgasms, but lacking the ability to jerk off.

-->Ted from See-Hear sent me this article about Cubbies, a store in North Carolina angry at France's rejections of the US war move:

"Because of Cubbie's support for our troops, we no longer serve french fries. We now serve freedom fries," says a sign in the restaurant's window.

Owner Neal Rowland said the switch from french fries to freedom fries came to mind after a conversation about World War I days when anti-German sentiment prompted Americans to rename familiar German foods like sauerkraut and frankfurter to liberty cabbage and hot dog.

Rowland said his intent is not to slight the French people, but to take a patriotic stance to show his support for the United States and the actions of President Bush.

"It's our way of showing our patriotic pride," he said, noting that his business has a lot of local military troops stop by as customers.

OK, now can I ask you for a Patriot Kiss?

-->In this column I mentioned the great sex and porn review zine *Batteries Not Included.* (Sorry, no pix in the zine.) It is a fine collection of intelligent sex writing. You can buy it for $3 an issue. If you subscribe for 6 issues, you get a free VHS sex tape. So send all your money to: BNI, 513 N. Central Ave, Fairborn, OH 45324. Questions? Email 'em to BNI@aol.com.

-->*What do they do in Kuwait dept:* In Los Angeles a man can legally beat his wife with a leather belt or strap. However, the belt can't be wider than two inches, unless he has his wife's consent to beat her with a wider strap. Consent must be given prior to the event.

"Pornography becomes a site of feminist exploration into what it has to say about desire, what kinds of fantasies it mobilizes, and how it structures diverse sexualities."
—Better Gordon, *Variety: the Pleasure in Looking*

Do I Buy It?

I'd been pacing my room and listening to the Nutcracker Suite on a cassette, contemplating what brand I'd choose if I started to smoke again after five years without a drag, when I got a phone call. A friend of mine was shooting a porn, would I like to operate the third camera to get some footage for the DVD? My gig would be to interview the actors and the crew, try to catch them while they were in makeup, or set up equipment. It wouldn't be a lot of money, but it would be something.

OK, so I say "porn", and you think: cumshots, fake tits, Viagra. There's a girl with long blond hair that you'd think was a wig, except it has roots. She's skinny with a big ass and her eyes are all glazed over. She is bent over and making noise not like a person makes, but more like the sound of a cat with it's tail stuck in the door, struggling, or maybe she's letting out a passionless fake moan that sounds like when you were a kid and you blew over the tops of glass bottles like they were flutes. When she gets off, she's probably not getting off at all, and it doesn't matter, because this video isn't really about women at all. It's about men, the woman's body as an image, and, really, *making something up.*

My First Feminist Porn Shoot

But baby, this is kooky San Francisco, so when I say "porn", I mean a woman producer, a woman director, rocker dykes and bi boys with dreds as actors, and a blonde line producer who is studying feminist studies at UC Berkeley.

There is a sexologist supervising the shoot, giving feedback,

narrating instructions on how to locate your g-spot from behind a mahogany desk; she is holding my bottle of lube. Since it is one of the days of the shoot without any sex scenes, they didn't have the safer sex supplies on-site. So they took all my condoms and my bottle of lube as props. Everyone thought it was pretty funny that I just happened to have lube on me, but I also carry a fork, a knife, a spoon, a bottle opener, earplugs, stamps, a book, nailpolish, tampons, and my journal. But still, ha ha ha. I'm the only one on the porn shoot with lube in her backpack.

The Point Is to Prove that Girls Can Ejaculate

The sexologist is an ejaculator. That means that she is able to ejaculate "from G-Spot stimulation." "Your G-Spot is on the frontal wall of your vagina [away from your butt], about 2-3 inches up, and the skin is a little rough. Firm but steady circular rubbing can cause some women to ejaculate." Female ejaculation is a joke to a lot of people; a stunt. A lot of women were really confused when they began to "pee" during sex, and their doctors had no answers, they told them it was urine. She explains that girl ejaculate exists: there have been studies that a liquid can be stored by the G-Spot, and that liquid has a different physical makeup, primarily a higher protein content, than piss. "Woman can ejaculate about enough liquid to fill a shotglass." She says, inches away from my half-full bottle of lube. I cringe, remembering the night before. I'm in the corner, video-taping the producer and the director—both articulate, tough women—while they debate the angle of the camera. The "Best Boy" (who is a woman and a fellow gardener) and I crack jokes about the clinical language and the description of the necessary curvature of the fingers as "those two *come-hither* fingers."

This is not how film is made in America. We adhere to an archaic and totally inflexible hierarchy. Often those in charge and those doing physically laborious work are born men, and those who do the makeup, art design and sometimes camera assistant work, are born women. This is not always true, of course, particularly for me, cuz I only work on rad projects I'm excited about where I know there will be lots of women involved. But to have the level of care taken in this production, with respect given to all members of the crew (including production assistants, who are often abused), is rare.

And the actors. One "couple" had met for coffee and bagels on the way to the audition and decided to go do it at one of their houses for "practice." The were both giggling the whole time I interviewed them, while the rad makeup woman tweezed eyebrows and insisted, "No close-ups, please!" Another of the couples was these two girls who were barely twenty, both strippers and feminists, both ejaculators. They sat around in kimonos and ate vegan sandwiches.

But What Happens when it Leaves the Set?

After a day of shooting, I was driving some guy I barely knew over the Bay Bridge, in the darkness, at the end of rush hour. Cops everywhere, and that tragic fog we see every day. We were drinking coffee and it was nighttime; he told me about the films he really wanted to make, B-movies with Zombies and Snowboards. But he's gonna pay for it by making porn, cuz there's just so much bad porn out there, you must be able to make money off good stuff. That's why he was volunteering to work on the set.

One thing that's changed in the past week is that men have started to casually begin conversations with me about porn all the time. Not lurid, descriptive conversations, just casual references.

I am in the room of a friend of this guy I've been hanging out with. The three of us sit in a circle, listening to metal. They are both smoking. It is Saturday and the room is dark, but sun comes in and it cuts in front of the smoke so it is perfectly illuminated yellow. I'm watching the smoke bend while they talk to each other. The guy's friend starts to ask me about the movie, about interviewing the porn star who is making a cameo in the instructional part of the film. "She has the best ass in the world," he insists, and I tell him she was hot in a Stevie Nicks sort of way. I tell him what I think: "She was really smart."

He puts in a tape and continues the conversation. I get anxious. I'm like, excuse me what are you doing. And he says, what, all porn is bad; you can't even see it. Which is not the point, and I tell him that. So he says it makes you feel weird to have this shit on in a room with two guys. And I say, yeah. And he turns it off, and he says he can't imagine what it would be like to be a girl, to have to worry about these things.

"Surely it is not merely an *image* which is one thing or the other, but equally (if not foremost) the *imagination* that employs the image in the service of its fantasy."

—B. Ruby Rich, *Anti-Porn: Soft Issue, Hard World*

Kat Case, PO Box 401160, San Francisco, CA 94140

Contest! Prizes!

Send me a picture, or a couple of pictures, to use for covers of my zines. The person who sends me the most interesting or just rad picture gets a roll of film (their preference), a picture of my roommate (who's a girl drummer), and some other stuff I cram into the box! Deadline is May 2, 2003, so send photo(s), film preference (speed, format, and whether you prefer b/w or color) right away.

I first started writing this column in February of 1996, after convincing Tim Yo that there was enough punk rock on the internet to make it worth writing about. Back in those days, the net was new and exciting and there were not nearly as many websites that dealt with punk rock. Search engines were hard to use, and there were not nearly as many bands with websites, email addresses, etc.

Well, the world has changed a lot in the last seven years, and now just about everybody you talk to has access to email, and most bands have websites. There are great resources that tell you everything you want to know about punk rock but were afraid to ask. Hell, even *MRR* has a site, which probably would have happened eventually, even if Tim were still at the helm (though it boggles my mind).

I've actually changed a lot too. Back when I started Netpunk, I was playing in a band and my job was managing a forklift company (making no use whatsoever of my liberal arts college education). Now, I work for a mom-and-pop Internet Service Provider (still making no use of my education), and am trying to find a band to play in, though not having a lotta luck. In other words, I use the net all day, every day, and it isn't nearly as new and exciting to me as it once was.

All of these factors have contributed to my decision to make this the last Netpunk column, at least written by yours truly. I don't know whether the powers-that-be at *MRR* will continue with a column about the net, but frankly I don't really believe there is a need anymore.

This, in my opinion, is a good thing. I no longer need to champion the net, or try to talk punks into seeing it as a tool to exploit, rather than some sort of evil capitalist tool (though it can be that too). The telephone isn't punk either, but punks still use it to book tours. Get it?

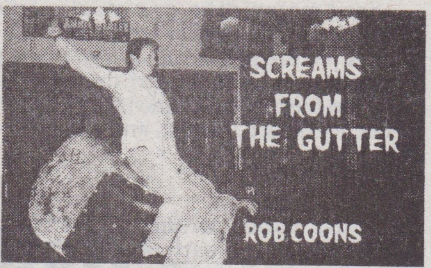
I was looking over my past columns this evening, and what amazes me is the stuff I was writing about in 1996 is still relevant today. There are still challenges to what you can read, write, and buy on the internet, and there are still privacy issues with what websites you visit, who can track you, etc.

It is encouraging that these issues are still around, because it means that the fight hasn't been lost yet. There are still all of the great online organizations that have (and will continue) to fight for your rights as a cyber citizen. These include the Electronic Frontier Foundation (http://www.eff.org/), the Center for Democracy and Technology (http://www.cdt.org/) and, of course, the ACLU (http://www.aclu.org). These three organizations have done more for internet freedom than just about anyone, and will hopefully continue to act as watchdogs as the Republifucks in power try to take more and more of our freedoms away.

Also still going strong is the International Punk List, though it's no longer hosted out of Finland like it was when it was started. The punk list has been around since 1991, and is still going strong. To subscribe, visit the punk list website at http://www.punk-list.org/ and follow the instructions in the FAQ section. I'll be hanging there for another decade at least.

So, anyway, I'm outta here for the last time. My email address, netpunk@diehippiedie.com, will continue to operate, and the Netpunk section at http://www.diehippiedie.com/ will remain. Maybe I'll even start a Blog or something there, just to

continue to put up anything new, cool, or exciting I find. Thanks to everyone who ever sent me submissions or feedback. See ya in the pit.



Wow! As I am sure most of you have heard by now, we had the Super Sabado Gigante fest come through the Bay Area back at the end of January. I don't want to spend a lot of time talking about it, but I can't let this column slip by without mentioning a few of the amazing bands that played. You know, it has been a long time since I went to a show and thought that every band that played was awesome. Well, I can say that about all four nights of these shows! And want to send a big thank you out to everybody who made it happen and all the bands that played. What an excellent way to start the year.

By far the best band of the weekend was KUNG FU RICK. I have mentioned in this magazine before how much I regretted not going to their show at Gilman a few years ago. So I knew that they were the "must see" for me of the whole fest. Well, all I can say is that any expectation I had was set on fire, stomped on, and thrown out of the club by their devastating set. It was total fucking blast beat mayhem, with the band spending more time jumping on tops of people's heads than on the stage. I don't know how they held it together, but they did. At one point the bass player even grabbed me by the hair and used the side of my forehead to play his bass. During the middle of their set I looked over at a friend and we gave each other that nod of disbelief over what we were seeing. Apparently one of the singers broke his wrist and was on his way to the hospital at the end of their set. I never did confirm that, but regardless I hope he is alright. I am glad I got to see them, because they have now broken up and are no more. And be sure to check out their new full length on 625 which is reviewed in this very issue.

After that, it is a toss up over who was the most mind-blowing over the weekend. I mean, how could you decide between such powerhouses as SHANK, KYLESA, MUNICIPAL WASTE, REAGAN SS, and so many more? Highlights, you ask? How about MUNICIPAL WASTE doing a flawless BODY COUNT cover? GUYANA PUNCH LINE'S heart-stopping and eardrum-blowing wall of musical insanity on both nights I saw them? Maybe KYLESA repeatedly sending goosebumps down my neck as they courted the dark side of humanity with their crushing set at Gilman? It doesn't matter, because it all ruled.

One thing that didn't rule was the "Fest Flu" that everybody in attendance at these shows seemed to come down with. It is no joke when I say that almost every person I knew who went to the any of the Super Sabado shows came down with a ferocious case of the flu. Even the bands were not safe, with a few of them canceling other shows here on the West Coast because of being so sick. What made it so gnarly was the fact that I have never seen that many people get sick at once. Trust me, I am no hypochondriac, but I will think twice the next time some grubby kid is inches away from me breathing all over my face. So if you ever want to take the punx out, just infect one of them, send him into a sold-out show, and watch the rest fall.

THE WHIP - "Freelance Liaison" EP: This band recently rolled through the Bay Area and proceeded to blow minds and crush eardrums with their blistering tunes. THE WHIP consists of two guys from KARP and Joe Preston from the THRONES. And since I was aware of this excellent lineage and I am a huge fan of both bands, I just knew THE WHIP was going to pulverizing. Their live set was packed with hard charging sonic mayhem. Thundering riffage, pummeling low-end, and some of the hardest drumming I have seen in a while. So if you are a fan of KARP or would like to know what the MELVINS would sound like on speed, then you must own this EP. While both songs here are excellent the song *Sheep & Goat Judgment* turned me into fist-pumping, head-banging ball of mayhem. Amazing! (Wantage USA, PO Box 8681, Missoula, MT 59807, www.wantageusa.com)

RAT IN A BUCKET - "Demo" CDR: A friend of mine recently forwarded me a variety of demos of bands from Louisiana, and the band RAT IN A BUCKET was by far the best. RAT IN A BUCKET crank out some blistering fast metallic grind, with lots of crazy time changes and most of the band pitching in sick growling vocals. They remind me of bands like Germany's Y. I hope RAT IN A BUCKET puts something out soon, because if it is anything like their demo, it will certainly be a blistering listen. (no address)

UNPERSONS - "Form Of Prayer" CD: Jeez, what is it about Georgia that makes so many of the bands from that area so dark, brutal, and depressing? UNPERSONS stick with the formula and play some dark haunting songs that roll together a variety of influences. While I hear a lot of AMEBIX influences in their songs, they expand way beyond that and slide through everything from emo to some JESUS LIZARD quirkiness. While I thought this was a solid listen and an interesting mix of styles, in the end I found myself wishing the songs were heavier. They just didn't have the bone-rattling crush that I look for in slower bands like this. They will be on tour this summer, so if this sounds like your cup of tea be sure and check them out. (Fish Fur, 121 E. 63rd St., Savannah, GA 31405, www.fishfur.com)

THEGAVINWILHELMMILLERQUARTET - "Idiot Savant" CD: Wow, this is one sick-ass CD! This band contains a member who was in AVUSLION and PARADE OF THE LIFELESS and it certainly shows! THEGAVINWILHELMMILLERQUARTET blaze through searing grindcore that is full of mind-bending blast beats and shredding guitar riffage. Yet this band goes far beyond your standard grindcore schlock. They incorporate these insane time changes that must be heard to be believed. They repeatedly go from crushing breakdown to eye-watering speedcore in the blink of an eye, constantly keeping your ears on edge trying to follow the music. There are only five songs on this CD (granted they are somewhat long) and from the sounds of the story in the insert they were a one-off project. So be sure to check this out before they fade away into obscurity. (Impatience or Indifference, 3201 3rd St., 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94124, www.ioirecords.com)

LOST KIDZ - "Vision Field" CD: Probably the first thing that I should point out here is that this band is from the same city in Quebec as the emo kings ONE EYED GOD PROPHECY once were. And while they don't sound completely like O.E.G.P., the influence definitely shows through. On this CD the LOST KIDZ wind their way through five songs of intense and abrasive emo. Harsh screechy vocals try to hind behind a wall of guitars and hasty drumming. I really like the way the music was relentless and basically overwhelmed the listener throughout the entire release. And something tells me they would be pretty awesome live as long as they don't stare at their amps the whole time with their backs turned to the crowd. (Benoit Pepin, 432 Boul. Queen Nord, Sherbrooke (Québec) J1H 3R3 CANADA)

A LIFE ONCE LOST - "The Fourth Plague Flies" split EP: Whoa! This band from Philadelphia comes blazing out of the gates with some straight-up metalcore. This is mostly mid-tempo metal/hardcore with harsh throat-punishing vocals and lots of crazy guitar riffs leading the way. They mix together a somewhat technical metal style with some super huge breakdowns creating a whirlwind of fist swinging metal. They aren't groundbreaking, but solid at what they do. (Deathwish Incorporated, 10 Lothrop Street, Beverly, MA 01915 USA, www.deathwishinc.com)

STOCKHOLM SYNDROME - "demo" CS: There is nothing quite like a good demo tape to get the ole' muscles moving around. Local boys STOCKHOLM SYNDROME have done just that, by whipping out this ten-song demo on our little punk rock ears. STOCKHOLM SYNDROME blaze through these songs with lots of hyperfast thrash and punk. I know there are a ton of musical influences working together here, but if I had to pinpoint a style I would have to say something like the early VOORHEES. I have got to see them live a couple times and their no stopping/ten minute sets leave me winded just from watching. I am not sure what they have got lined up for future releases, but be sure to be on the lookout for anything that may come your way. (Stockholm Syndrome, PO Box 1011, Burlingame, CA 94011)

SAVAGE REPUBLIC - "Tragic Figures" CD: This release was originally put out way back in 1982 and it recently was reissued along with three other CDs that pretty much cover the existence of the band. While all of the CDs are good in their own way, I believe that *Tragic Figures* is the must-own of the bunch. SAVAGE REPUBLIC's sound basically centered around a strong mix of heavy percussion, that was fed by strong tribal rhythms mixed with lots of crashing and banging of metal objects. Deep throbbing bass lines crash headfirst into turbulent guitar licks and

gnarled angry vocals creating a hypnotic musical style. Imagine if you took a modern version of NEUROSIS and stripped away all their flash and production, and then tossed in some early SONIC YOUTH for good measure....I think you are starting to get the picture. (Mobilization, PO Box 460951, San Francisco, CA 94146-0951)

AI - "A Hope On The Concrete" CD: I recently picked up bunch of records put out by Bloodsucker Records (thanks to the almighty mailorder Hardcore Holocaust!) While everything thing I got was really great the one thing that really stood out was this release by AI. They play killer hard charging Japanese style punk rock with choppy drumming, ripping guitars, and in your face vocals. If you are a fan of bands like PAINTBOX and FORWARD, then you should seek this one out at all costs. (Bloodsucker Records, JAPAN)

I want to give a huge shout-out to all the folks that have been sending in things for review. With that said, I want to point out a few things. Please try not to send me things that have already been reviewed in the regular review section of *MRR*. Since I only do a column every other month I have limited space. So if your release has already been reviewed elsewhere in this magazine, please think twice before sending it to me, because I may not have room for it. One other thing to point out is that due to those space constraints, I may forward releases that are sent to me to the magazine for reviews in the regular section. So if you do not see your release here, then look there as well. I will do everything I can to make sure it gets into the magazine one way or another! So keep those things that are good, slow, hard, heavy, metal, thrash, punk, fast, hardcore, grind, doom and gloomy coming my way. Thanks! PO Box 13085, Berkeley, CA 94712, xgoatcorex@hotmail.com

"Haulin' ass blast beat hardcore punk. Nothing else is delivered with such hostility. I say hats off to hardcore punk. No other music separates me from society. It's a music of revolution, free from corporate pollution. Few in number and always will be. Let the mainstreamers spend their money on bobby bands that could give a fucking shit. If you even goddamn exist."

—THE NEIGHBORS, "Hats Off To Hardcore"

One of the most striking aspects of life in Third World countries is information starvation. Because, unlike we Americans, they roads and telephones. Business-people need to know if a border with a neighboring country is open so they can decide whether or not to send out a truck. Citizens need to know their government's international standing—are those falling bombs their leader's fault? Hunger for news hurts a country almost as much as hunger for food.

The First Amendment enshrines freedom of the press in the US Constitution, but a variety of forces conspire to prevent totally free access to information. Residents of most cities rely on one large daily newspaper, usually part of a media conglomerate that itself owns the biggest local radio and television stations in other cities. Directors of that corporation and the editors who work for them are frequently loathe to offend influential government officials and business tycoons, for if they get cut off—excluded from access to press releases, interviews, leaks, etc.—their ability to collect news is impeded. One might argue that such "news" is little more than bullshit propaganda, but fear of causing offense often inhibits the media's natural role as a watchdog of democracy.

Our government very rarely censors the media. It doesn't have to.

A new, subtle form of self-censorship has recently become commonplace. A news story is covered in full, minus a crucial fact that changes the entire tenor of the piece. That missing bit of information is invariably something that would make someone important look bad.

The American media has, for example, devoted extensive coverage to political unrest in Venezuela, where mobs loyal to President Hugo Chávez have clashed with striking employees of the state oil company. The crisis sparked an attempted coup d'état in April 2002. To busy Americans, this looks like a simple story of a right-wing Latin American dictator crushing poor workers. That's because three key facts are regularly omitted from the story. First, the oil company strike was called by its wealthy managers, not its workers. Second, Chávez was democratically elected. Third, the coup plotters were backed by the Bush Administration. "We were sending informal, subtle signals that we don't like this guy," said a US Defense Department official quoted in *The Guardian*, an English paper that has become an important post-9/11 resource for Americans in search of objective reporting. The bully, it turns out, is us—not Chávez, a leftist who is standing up for his nation's poor.

Similarly, the North Korean crisis looks like a simple case of crafty commies welching on their agreement not to develop nukes in exchange for economic aid. Repeatedly left out of the thousands of words spilled daily on this topic are the contents of the 1994 North Korea-US Agreed Framework, in which President Clinton promised to develop full diplomatic relations with Kim Jung Il's regime, and North Korean warnings dating to 1999 that they would resume nuclear research unless the US kept up its end of the bargain.

North Korea is violating the agreement. But the US broke it years earlier.

The closest thing to a "smoking gun" found by UN arms inspectors in Iraq is 12 warheads found at an ammo dump south of Baghdad. Americans know that the White House considers this discovery a "material breach" that justifies war. Few are aware that, as reported Jan. 17 in the *UK Telegraph*, the canisters were empty, and are probably American-made shells sold to Iraq by the Reagan administration. Not much of a "smoking gun."

Scratch the surface and you find this sort of thing all over the "news." Democratic complaints that the Bush tax cuts only benefit the "richest one percent" of Americans are duly reported, but leave out a definition of the term. Did you know that you have to earn more than $330,000 a year to be in the top one percent? Nineteen percent of Americans don't. They told *Time* that they think they're in that top one percent.

Perhaps you've read that American soldiers are fighting off guerrillas loyal to warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar in eastern Afghanistan. Hekmatyar, the Associated Press says, is "believed by Afghan and US authorities to be allied with Taliban and Al Qaeda remnants." That may be true. But Hekmatyar was always a sworn enemy of the Taliban—until the CIA tried to kill him last May, with a Hellfire missile fired by a Predator drone plane.

One missing detail. Changes the story a little, doesn't it?

P.S. NEW BOOK: *GAS WAR: THE TRUTH BEHIND THE AMERICAN OCCUPATION OF AFGHANISTAN* is out. It's my comprehensive, painstakingly researched look at the real reason Bush ordered the invasion of Afghanistan: to run a gas pipeline from the world's biggest oil reserves (in Kazakhstan) to the sea for transportation by tankers. *GAS WAR* relies on mainstream sources to piece together the biggest scandal of the century so far—how the world's richest nation bombed its poorest for the sake of corporate gain. *GAS WAR* is available through my website www.RALL.com or Amazon but not through most bookstores because none of my regular publishers dared touch this controversial topic. Alternatively, you can mail $15 (includes Priority Mail shipping within the US) to: Ted Rall, PO Box 2092, Times Square Station, New York, NY 10108.

I was recently at a club called Siberia in the Times Square/Hell's Kitchen Area of NYC. True to its name, Siberia is remote from the usual punk/cool hangout areas of Manhattan. This ugly, graffitied wall basement (with no ventilation and a seriously crappy PA) is where I'd gone to catch one of my favorite bands, the Spittoons, at a "Dot-Dash" event. (See previous issue of *MRR* re: Dot Dash.) The Spittoons were in a supporting slot for (ex-Devil Dog) Andy G.'s band; Andy G. and The Roller Kings. I approached Kris Parrish, the Spittoon's drummer, and asked her if they were

going to perform their kick-ass rendition of the Ronettes' "Be My Baby", considering the fact that Phil Spector, the producer of this and dozens of other hits, had just been arrested for murder. Kris kinda shrugged and said that she was thinking about it, but they had already decided on the set before the Phil Spector shocker had occurred, and "Be My Baby" wasn't in it. Ah well, I wasn't going to be hearing the song live that night, although it had been playing constantly in my head.

You see, I've been thinking a lot about poor crazy old Phil and the tragic death of the actress Lana Clarkson, his alleged murder victim. Phil Spector is a man who has obviously been suffering from some sort of mental affliction for years and he has never gotten the sort of help that he needs. At 62, he's long been considered nutty. Yet during all of these years, no one who knew him ever imagined him to be murderous. Ronnie Spector of the Ronettes, Phil's ex-wife (whom Joey Ramone produced for Kill Rock Stars), said on TV that she never thought Phil would kill anyone. Dee Dee Kennibrew, one of backing vocalists in the the Crystals, told *Celebrity Justice* that Phil was "mean, but never violent." Marky Ramone told Fox News: "I don't think he would hurt a fly. Until anything happens, you're innocent until you're proven guilty. I don't think Phil had it in him to murder anybody." When the interviewer reminded Marky of the incident when Phil pulled a gun on Dee Dee during the recording of the *End Of The Century* album, he responded, "A lot of these things were overblown and a lot of these things were alcohol-induced. You can have a gun and wave it around, but that doesn't mean you're gonna use it....There's no way Phil would have shot Dee Dee Ramone." Sadly, Dee Dee and Joey have passed on now and cannot offer their own perspectives. In an email to Arturo Vega, (the Ramones' longtime friend and collaborator) I asked what his recollections of Phil were. He replied;

"We (Johnny, Joey, Dee Dee, and I) spent one evening at his mansion that turned into an ordeal. He separated us in different rooms, so Dee Dee and I were in one room and he came in with a gun. He wouldn't talk to us. At first we were nervous, but after a while we realized it was a game. Then Dee Dee started talking about the gun in detail and he realized that Dee Dee knew what he was talking about, and he was "disarmed" by Dee Dee's charm and knowledge, and he walked out."

As bizarre as this behavior may sound, it's interesting to note that nearly everyone who knew or was friends with Phil Spector claims that he would never be violent or commit a murder.

But, Lana Clarkson has been shot and killed with a single gunshot to her head.

It is true that Mr. Spector's past history of physical violence is scant. In my research I've noted that although he's been notoriously known for mentally torturing people, there's been not much in the way of actual physical violence. Phil supposedly knocked David Geffen to the ground with a punch to the face for badgering him during a Cher recording session. He also once threw an ashtray at (his then-wife) Ronnie Spector's head during a very emotionally trying time in his life. (He had just been blackmailed by a photographer into buying negatives of photographs of the overdosed dead body of his comedian friend Lenny Bruce to keep them out of the tabloids.) In all the material that I've read, these two incidents are about the extent of it. Until *now*, that is.

Unlike the OJ Simpson or Robert Blake situations, Mr. Spector did not really know his alleged victim. It is reported that he'd only just met Ms. Clarkson the previous evening. So what could the motive for a murder be? Is it possible that Spector was simply waving his gun around, as he is inclined to do…but this time it went off? Well, supposedly something to this effect is going to be Mr. Spector's defense. Apparently, Spector had been heavily drinking on the night Ms. Clarkson's death after many years of abstaining. Ironically, Spector had been off the booze because of all the mishaps that have happened to him in the past while he was drunk (such as pointing his gun at Dee Dee Ramone, and firing his gun into the ceiling while John Lennon… also drunk… was smashing Mr. Spector's chandelier with a golf club). Hey, it's the rock-n-roll lifestyle, right? Supposedly, Phil was back on the sauce again while he was showing Ms. Clarkson his gun. Bang!

Spector's fascination with guns certainly is peculiar and sick. Especially considering that a gun is what was used to murder his longtime friend John Lennon, for whom he produced hit records like *Instant Karma,* and the albums *Some Time In New York, Imagine,* and *Rock And Roll.* As of the time I am writing this, the full story of what happened has yet to come out. Since Ms. Clarkson was apparently killed with a single gunshot, it's not inconceivable that her death may indeed have been the result of some tragic accident and not a deliberate murder. One may very well wonder if it's possible for "crazy Phil" to get a fair trial, considering his reputation as "mad," even if the accident story is true. We'll see. The fact that Spector was released on bail, while most alleged murderers in California (including Robert Blake) are denied bail, may indicate that the judge thinks Phil's version of the situation is somewhat credible. Whatever Spector's verdict will be, I find it hard to imagine that he'll get off easy. Even if it was a terrible accident… the drunken handling of a gun which results in death isn't just an "Ooops! Sorry about that."

I'm probably more depressed about the whole thing than most people because I'm such a huge fan of the Spector sound. It's a strong influence on punk, but it's probably an influence that few kids today are really very aware of. Spector is almost a forgotten figure in music among the general public. Even the policewoman who made the initial announcement to the press got it wrong when she stated to the television cameras that they had arrested "Mr. Spector of Motown Records," a record label that he had absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with. (Many of the recording artists Spector produced in the 1960s were African American, and to the musically ignorant: Blacks + 60s = Motown.) In addition, all over TV, I saw reporting errors about just which artists Phil had produced. Several reporters said that he'd produced Elvis, which was totally wrong. I got the word from Dave-the-Spazz, a radio DJ on WFMU and former singer for punk rock bands the Sea Monkeys, the Shemps, and currently the Yams. Dave let me know that what Spector did was produce some demo tapes for Elvis to hear to see if the "King" would be interested in recording the songs himself.

But even if you don't know who he is, if you listen to a Spector production like on the Crystals' "Da Doo Ron Ron", you'll easily hear it in the throbbing drive of the song. This sound influenced punk! Many of the earliest New York CBGB punk bands like Blondie and the Ramones were directly aiming for that big Wall-of-Sound that Spector originated. Spector wanted his records to sound powerful and they are meant to be played *loud*.

Like the Ramones, whom he also produced, Phil Spector was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, although he never really benefited from it. The Rock establishment respected him, but they never really accepted him. In fact he was often openly derided, rejected, and sabotaged by the music industry. The industry considered him a maverick. His records were criticized as too "noisy." His behavior too "eccentric." Through it all, Spector was worshipped and hated, envied and loathed.

People who know little about him often wonder why he became such a recluse. It had a lot to do with the mainstream Rock industry's rejection. Phil was once right in the mainstream, because his sound was different and setting a new standard. Phil was not one to follow trends, but to set them. When the Spector sound wasn't trendy anymore, Phil was on the outs. Sonny Bono worked for Spector in his early musical career, and he once suggested to Phil that he should change his sound. Sonny Bono was out of the job shortly after that. How ironic it must have seemed to Phil, when Sonny and Cher made it big by copying the Spector sound and even using the exact same session musicians that Phil was using!

Phil Spector has said that the only time he's ever really happy and comfortable is in the recording studio. As the years went on, this became extremely more difficult once the music industry turned its back. When Spector was doing what he thought were his greatest artistic successes, radio stations that had always played his music in the past shut him out. It's not that people didn't *want* to hear new things from Spector—they did! It was the nature of radio that had changed. It was going Corporate.

Spector never watered down his records. He refused to. He would only produce records in his own style. Once the industry decided they didn't want his style, radio stopped playing his records. This is the sort of situation Spector was increasingly unable to deal with. Unable to tolerate what the music industry became, he withdrew. He expressed his dismay at the state of popular music at his induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, only to be rebuffed by the Who's Pete Townsend, who told Spector that is was not up to people like them to understand today's music industry, it was only up to them to "get the fuck out of the way," as if to suggest that the industry knew what was best for music.

"Hope I die before I get old," indeed! But whatever the sad and shabby state of Phil Spector the man may be, he produced some of the greatest rock-and-roll ever. His Wall-of-Sound has been much copied but never duplicated.

The last record Phil produced that was released was Yoko Ono's, in 1981, and that was only partially produced by him. The

song "No, No, No" from that album is amazing, among Spector's best work, in my opinion. The album cover for the *Season Of Glass* record featured a photograph of John Lennon's actual bloodstained glasses. In another of those same strange ironies that follows Spector's bizarre life, at the same time he allegedly killed Lana Clarkson with a gun, a free public service postcard of the album cover of *Season Of Glass* was issued. It reads:

"Over 676,000 people have been killed by guns in the USA since John Lennon was shot and killed on December 8, 1980."

****

Some little known but great Spector-produced records:
All Grown Up - the Crystals (the Chuck Berry-ish version. Lead vocal, Lala Brooks)
Hold On, Baby - Ike & Tina Turner
Little Boy - The Crystals (lead vocal, Lala Brooks)
Run, Run, Runaway - Darlene Love
Hold Me Tight - the Treasures
Hung On You - Righteous Brothers
(Let's Dance) The Screw Part 1 - the Crystals
Why Do Lovers Break Each Others Hearts? - Bob B. Sox and the Blue Jeans (lead vocal, Darlene Love)
I Wonder - the Crystals (lead vocal, Lala Brooks)
**Note: the Crystals had different lead vocalists on different songs, but many of my faves are with Lala)*
Heartbreaker - the Crystals (lead vocal, Lala Brooks)
This Could Be The Night - The Modern Folk Quartet
Don't Go Home With Your Hard On - Leonard Cohen
A Woman's Story - Cher
Ringo, I Love You - Cher (credited as Bonnie Joe Mason)
Proud Mary - the Checkmates
Strange Love - Darlene Love
A Long Way To Be Happy - Darlene Love
Tandoori Chicken - Ronnie Spector
All The Way - the Ramones

Some punk versions of Spector records:
River Deep Mountain High - THE SAINTS (originally by Ike & Tina Turner)
River Deep Mountain High - THE FLAMING GROOVIES (originally by Ike & Tina Turner)
Do I Love You - THE FLAMING GROOVIES (originally by the Ronettes)
The Best Part of Breaking Up - THE DEVIL DOGS (originally by the Ronettes)
I Wonder - SUPERSNAZZ (recorded by both the Ronettes and the Crystals)
Be My Baby - THE SPITTOONS (originally by the Ronettes)
Be My Baby - THE DRONES (originally by the Ronettes)
Then I Kissed Her - THE DRONES
Then I Kissed Her - THE HARD ONS
Then I Kissed Her - THE RICHIES
And Then I Kissed Her - THE JOEYS
Then I Kicked Her - THE LURKERS (all of the above originally "Then He Kissed Me", by the Crystals)
He's A Rebel - THE RAUNCHETTES (originally by the Crystals)
To Know Him Is To Love Him - MICK FARREN & THE DEVIANTS (originally by the Teddy Bears)
Da Doo Ron Ron - THE DONNAS, when they were still good (originally by the Crystals)

And many more…Not to mention all of the versions of songs from the Ramones' *End Of The Century* album done by other punk bands far too numerous to mention.

No.

The two most important words ever written were by Douglas Adams in the book Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy. These words are "DON'T PANIC." Hard advice to heed these days. By the time you read this, the US may be at war. The US may already have fought a war. The US may have narrowly averted war, but gained the bile and mistrust of a score of nations who have now seen its bald-faced transition to empire brought more to the forefront than ever before in our history. By the time you read this, we are likely on high-level terrorist alert, code mauve (or whatever it is this week), which promises to put you and your friends in mortal danger or jail any minute now. Just remember the words of Douglas Adams: DON'T PANIC. These are emphatically not the words of John Ashcroft. Though he may say something very similar, or indeed use the exact same phrasing, his intent is completely different. John Ashcroft wants you to panic. More than anything, he wants you to panic. He wants you to hide in your house, barricade your doors and windows, then cover them with duct tape. He wants you to report your neighbors for "suspicious activities." He wants you to "watch what you say and do." That sounds remarkably close to panic to me.

The reason the current US administration and their corporate clients want you to panic is simple: it is because they are panicking. No, they are not panicking because they feel that they are truly threatened by Islamic Fundamentalism, or that America's security is threatened by evil unseen international forces led by shadowy figures and tinhorn despots. They are not panicking because they sense that our old allies, all former colonial superpowers themselves, are increasingly speaking out against our present expansionist policies. They are not panicking because the streets of the world are filling with cries of outrage against our unilateral, "preemptive" actions. They are not panicking because the old oil and energy companies (many of which they have vast holdings in and jobs with) are crumbling under allegations of thievery and corruption. No, they are not panicking from any of these things.

They are panicking because they are oil men, and the oil is running out.

Oil is a finite resource, and one that has, over the past century and a half, produced faster progress and more pain and suffering than any single thing in history. These oil men know that supplies are dwindling, and oil is all they know. They are growing desperate, like a junkie needing a fix. That 7-11 down the block looks awfully tempting when you just want a couple of bucks to hook up what you need, but it may not be such a good idea when everybody in town knows you, by face, as the fat rich bastard up on the hill who stockpiles guns. Who also happens to be the mayor. Yelling about what the clerk said about your mother isn't going to cut it in court, and you can only use mayoral immunity for so long.

These oil men are panicking because the US has absorbed so much of the world's wealth to hyperinflate its own standard of living that the new markets they hoped would open up for their product have not fully materialized yet. China and India, two of the world's most densely populated and rapidly developing countries, each have around 29 cars per 1000 people—a very different number than the United States, which has around 561 cars per 1000 people. This will change. Much like Big Tobacco, another industry specializing in a product whose main side effect is death, the oil industry knows its days are numbered in the US, where the average person is educated enough and has just enough consumer protections to let them know that these products are bad for them and that alternatives must be sought. George Bush has stated emphatically that hydrogen-cell technology (the most expensive and, currently the least developed of the alternative vehicular energy sources) will be the predominant auto fuel by 2020, and to prove it he has six million-dollar hydrogen-powered minivans tooling around Washington, DC. Seventeen years is a long time to develop a sustainable source of auto fuel (especially when super efficient hybrids and market-ready alternatives already exist), a very long time in our world today. Enough time for them to sell millions of gas-sucking, inefficient vehicles in the vastly poorer regions of the world, much as the tobacco companies have done with cigarettes now that they are much more limited with regard to dealing them in the US.

That this war and this US empire is all about oil has become more transparent to the world than ever before, and the world has responded with varying degrees of outrage. That the US has responded to this widespread sentiment with ever-increasing shows of bravado, bluster, and sheer reactionary stupidity simply shows the depth to which our "leaders" have sunk in their ignorance (they seem to prefer calling it "resolve"). Take solace in the fact that they are scared, though—the one thing they truly know is in short supply. This war is a panic move: An attempt to dominate an entire region that has clearly and repeatedly expressed its desire to not be dominated, and it will create huge

problems for the US. The gang in charge of the empire does not care: They are old and fat, and will die soon. They do not care about the future beyond their short lifetimes. Despite their "Christian" protestations to the contrary, they are not driven by any noble (or even wrongheaded) cause. Their ideology is, simply, money, and the acquisition of it. They are fundamentalist capitalists; they rule the world right now, and when the shit comes down they will bail like some indicted Enron executive to Thailand, where they will frequent child prostitutes and eventually be torn to shreds by an angry mob.

In the end, however, we're younger, we're tougher, there are many, many more of us in the world than them, and we are possessed of genuine ideals. In the end, we will win. I just hope I'm here to see it.

One thing for sure is that there will be a really big mess to clean up, which brings me to next month's subject: The four most important words ever written, coincidentally also by Douglas Adams: "Always bring a towel."

—Johnny Newfangled Contraption, PO Box 3026, Oakland, CA 94609, johngeek@hotmail.com

CrimethInc.
Workers' Collective
Bullet-in

CrimethInc. Recipe Series #1: Affinity Groups

One of our next projects here at CrimethInc. (de-)Central is an anarchist cookbook: no, not for making food, silly (we get all that out of the trash, or from our rich parents, so I hear), nor bombs—this one's for activities. We're putting together a collection of how-to pieces on everything from tabling and wheatpasting to street confrontations and more unusual endeavors, something like Earth First's *Ecodefense* manual, only for the urban/suburban context. The idea is to put all the information in the hands of the jaded thirty-somethings in cities like New York and Eugene, where you can barely get away with simple shoplifting, in the hands of the teenagers of places like Topeka, Kansas, where most of these tactics are still brand new and highly effective.

Once a month or so, with your good graces, we'll print one of our recipes-in-progress here, in hopes that everyone who knows more about this stuff than we do, or has some other perspective, will tell us what we've forgotten to include. By all means, please let us know aspects of each subject we've ignored, or lessons you've learned in practice that are important to keep in mind, or possible variations on each theme.

Without further ado, here's our first draft—something probably very familiar to all of you, but sadly not familiar enough, apparently, to the young folks in the last few marches I participated in. Please tell us what's missing! Thanks so much for your help!

AFFINITY GROUP

Materials:

A circle of friends
Trust
Consensus
Secrecy
A good idea
Plans for different scenarios
Structures to respond to unexpected scenarios
A little courage (may be optional)
Action!
Subsequent discussion

How many people should comprise an affinity group?

Size can range from two to, say, fifteen individuals, depending on the action in question; but no group should be so numerous that an informal conversation about pressing matters is impossible. You can always split up into two or more groups, if there are enough of you.

Is the affinity group a permanent arrangement?

No, an affinity group is a structure of convenience, ever mutable, assembled from the pool of interested and trusted people for the duration of a given project. Once assembled, this group may choose to be "closed," if security dictates: that is, whatever goes on within the group is never spoken of outside it, even after all its other activities are long completed. A particular team can act together over and over as an affinity group, but the members can also participate in other affinity groups, break up into smaller affinity groups, and act outside the affinity group structure.

Chances are, even if you have never been involved in direct action before, even if this is the first radical text you have ever encountered, that you are already part of an affinity group—the structure proven most effective for guerrilla activities of all kinds. An affinity group is simply a circle of friends who, knowing each other's strengths, weaknesses, and life histories, and having already established a common language and healthy internal dynamics, sets out to accomplish a goal or series of goals.

Affinity groups can be practically invincible. They cannot be infiltrated, because all members share history and intimacy with each other, and no one outside the group need be informed of their plans or activities. They are more efficient than the most professional military force: they are free to adapt to any situation; they need not pass their decisions through any complicated process of ratification; all individuals can act and react instantly without waiting for orders, yet with a clear idea of what to expect from one another. The mutual admiration and inspiration they are founded upon makes them almost impossible to demoralize. In stark contrast to capitalist, fascist, and communist structures of all kinds, they function without any need for hierarchy or coercion: participation in an affinity group can be fun as well as effective. Most important of all, they are motivated by shared desire and loyalty, rather than profit, duty, or any other compensation or abstraction: small wonder whole squads of riot police have been held at bay by small affinity groups armed with only the tear gas canisters shot at them.

Affinity groups operate on the consensus model: decisions are made collectively, based on the needs and desires of every individual involved. Democratic votes, in which the majority get their way and the minority must hold their tongues, are anathema to affinity groups: if a group is to function smoothly and hold together, every individual involved must be satisfied. In advance of any action, the members of a group establish together what their personal and collective goals are, what their readiness for risk is (as individuals and as a group), and what their expectations of each other are. These things determined, they formulate a plan.

Since action situations are always unpredictable and plans rarely come off as anticipated, an affinity group usually has a dual approach to preparing for them. On the one hand, plans are made for different scenarios: *if A happens, we'll inform each other by X means and switch to plan B; if X means of communication is impossible, we'll reconvene at site Z at Q o'clock.* On the other hand, structures are put in place that will be useful even if what happens resembles none of the imagined scenarios: internal roles are divided up, communications systems (such as two-way radios, or coded phrases for conveying secret information or instructions aloud) are established, general strategies (for maintaining composure, keeping sight of one another in confusing environments, or blocking police charges, to name some examples) are prepared, emergency escape routes are charted, legal support is readied in case anyone gets arrested. After an action, a shrewd affinity group will meet (again, if necessary, in a secure location) to discuss what went well, what could have gone better, and what comes next.

An affinity group answers to itself alone—this is one of its great strengths. Affinity groups are not burdened by the procedural protocol of other organizations, the difficulties of reaching accord among strangers or larger numbers of people, or the limitations of answering to a body not immediately involved in the action. At the same time, just as the members of an affinity group strive for consensus with each other, each affinity group should strive for a similarly considerate relationship with other individuals and groups—or, at the very least, to complement their approaches wherever possible, even if these others do not recognize the value of their contribution. Others should be thrilled about the participation or intervention of affinity groups, not resent or fear them; they should come to recognize the value of the affinity group model, and so come to apply it themselves, from seeing it succeed and from benefiting from that success.

An affinity group can work together with other affinity groups, in what is sometimes called a cluster. The cluster formation enables a larger number of individuals to act with the same advantages a single affinity group has. If speed or secrecy is

called for, representatives of each group can meet ahead of time, rather than the entirety of all groups; if coordination is of the essence, the groups or representatives can arrange methods for communicating through the heat of the action. Over years of collaborating together, different affinity groups can come to know each other as well as they know themselves, and become accordingly more comfortable and capable together.

When several clusters of affinity groups need to coordinate especially massive actions—for a big demonstration, for example—they can hold a spokescouncil meeting. In this author's humble experience, the most effective, constructive spokescouncils are those that limit themselves to providing a forum in which different affinity groups and clusters can inform one another (to whatever extent is wise) of their intentions, rather than seeking to direct activity or dictate principles for all. Such an unwieldy format is ill-suited to lengthy discussion, let alone debate; and whatever decisions are made, or limitations imposed, by such a spokescouncil will inevitably fail to represent the wishes of all involved. The independence and spontaneity that decentralization provides are our greatest advantages in combat with an enemy that has all the other advantages, anyway—why sacrifice these?

The affinity group is not only a vehicle for changing the world—like any good anarchist practice, it is also a model for alternative worlds, and a seed from which such worlds can grow. In an anarchist economy, decisions are not made by boards of directors, nor tasks carried out by masses of worker drones: affinity groups, circles of friends who share common needs and interests, decide and act together. Indeed, the affinity group/cluster/spokescouncil model is simply another incarnation of the communes and worker's councils which formed the backbone of earlier successful (however short-lived) anarchist revolutions.

Not only is the affinity group the best format for getting things done, it's practically essential. You should always attend any event that might prove exciting in an affinity group—not to mention the ones that won't be, otherwise! Without a structure that encourages ideas to flow into action, without friends with whom to brainstorm and barnstorm and build up momentum, you are paralyzed, cut off from much of your own potential; with them, you are multiplied by ten, or ten thousand! "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world," as Margaret Mead wrote: "it's the only thing that ever has." She was referring, whether she knew the jargon or not, to affinity groups. If every individual in every action against the state and status quo participated as part of a tight-knit, dedicated affinity group, this revolution would be over in a few short years.

You and your friends can change the world. Stop wondering what's going to happen, or why nothing's happening, and start deciding *what will happen*. Don't just show up at the next demonstration, protest, punk show, traffic jam, or day at work in passive spectator mode, waiting to be told what to do or entertained. Get in the habit of trading crazy ideas about what should happen at these events—and of making those ideas reality!

An affinity group could be a sewing circle, a bicycle maintenance collective, or a traveling clown troupe; it could come together for the purpose of starting a local chapter of Food Not Bombs, discovering how to turn a bicycle into a record player, or forcing a multinational corporation out of business through a carefully orchestrated program of sabotage. Affinity groups have planted and defended community gardens, burned down and built and squatted buildings, organized neighborhood childcare programs and wildcat strikes; individual affinity groups routinely initiate revolutions in the visual arts and popular music. It was an affinity group that invented the airplane. Another, composed of disgruntled Nietzsche enthusiasts, nearly succeeded in assassinating Adolf Hitler during the second world war. Your favorite band—they were an affinity group.

Let five girls and boys meet who are resolved to the lightning of action rather than the quiet agony of survival—from that moment, despair ends and tactics begin.

AUTONOMY, CAMARADERIE, ENGAGEMENT—
ALL POWER TO THE AFFINITY GROUPS!

contact: CrimethInc. Friendship Society, PO Box 2133, Greensboro, NC 27402 USA, www.crimethinc.com

Most of the stuff that happens in my life that's worthy of being written about has very little to do with the punk rocks; not tnded trajectory of the magazine and write a little about rock and roll.

Some friends of mine have a band and were kind enough to let me come along with them for a bit when they toured the northeast a couple of months ago. Let's say, for argument's sake, they're called True North. They were invited to tour with a band who've garnered a bit of commercial success for themselves in the past year; it seemed like someone in their camp was trying to toss them a bone by letting them invite some of their crazy punk rock friends, and maybe in the process some industry types could sniff around a bit and see if there was anything left at the bottom of the jar. Let's say this band was called the Blood Brothers. Now there's a wild card, and I'm not talking about in the John Candy or Leif Garret kind of a way. When your band gets wrapped up in the world of booking agents and tour managers and they're not so involved in the mechanics of setting up shows and such, weird things happen. Like bands that for some reason have some money behind them but not so much of a, how do I say it...*fanbase*, get foisted on bands who've been around, toured, put out records, you know—band stuff. So let's say that happened on this tour, and a third band is now on said tour. Let's say they're called The Vaux.

First I want to talk about the *weird things*. It was kind of *weird* to see True North play to a packed Knitting Factory in Manhattan. Not because I don't think they're a good band—they are, and actually, the way things have gone in the entertainment world in the past ten years, I don't see their brand of Jehu-influenced rock music as being wholly uncommercial. It was just weird, you know? You know, man? The next weird thing was the Blood Brothers. I met them once years ago when they came to Gainesville to play. They seemed to be part of a larger onslaught of chaotic hardcore bands , though a little younger and a little sloppier. Now, besides being a lot tighter, their music is no more accessible, no slower, not noticeably tamer. So it's weird to me that some label somewhere thinks that they're a lucrative investment. Whatever. More power to 'em. Let's talk about The Vaux.

Now when I use the phrase "rock and roll", or even "rock 'n' roll" in my column, I'm admittedly being condescending or dismissive. Why not? But The Vaux is a *rock and roll band*. They sound like 70s rock. And I know that Maximum *Rock and Roll* launched a thousand pissy infights when it wouldn't review the Rain Like The Sound of Trains LP years ago, but RLTSOT were nerds while this band is at least half, if not two thirds, snowboarder musclehead bullies. They're like Michelob's houseband at a ski resort. I am totally serious. The singer mounts the stage like a quivering virgin and works his lower half likewise. They scheme about getting laid on tour, they whine about playing order (if they're up first, that is), and they tried to physically intimidate the much, much smaller Blood Brothers when they got frustrated about the payment disparity (in all fairness, it is a considerable disparity). Now I was only around for three days, I admit, but these dudes were all like, *"dude,"* where I was all like, *"maaannnn!"*

So, Vaux, I must now admit that it was me yelling at you from the wings at the Knitting Factory. I know it was hard to see with all the lights in your eyes, but I was the guy who yelled "Teenage Wasteland." And I didn't mean the song. I was referring to your sorry, sorry asses. The Vaux, you are the Teenage Wasteland. You're all wasted, and not in the fun Dillinger 4 way, but in the I-only-had-five-dollars-in-the-world-and-dropped-it-in-dogshit way. This band seems to be the product of being in bands being too fun and easy. They obviously never had to run the gauntlet.

I guess it was At The Drive In that was the first of my peers that shocked me when they were taken up as torchbearers of major label moving and shaking. I really liked them, and it's too bad they they couldn't handle it; but it was strange to me that anyone thought they would gain a huge, profit-generating audience. They were too weird, I thought. But since their premature implosion, it seems that interests have been vying for an act to fill their spot. I guess that's what the Blood Brothers are for—to go

on the shelves where bands like Jane's Addiction and Faith No More went years ago. Creative music that's crazy, but not *too crazy*.

It's no puzzle at all as to how The Vaux got their deal. They're meatheads who make you want to forget your shitty job and all your problems, dance the beer-in-my-hand dance for approximately 40 minutes, then go home. They're the kind of band that preps each other for the *industry people* at the NYC show. I cannot understate what a boring crock of shit this kind of thing is.

But at the same time, it's *all* crap. Talking about major labels and rock shows is as nuanced and interesting as drawings on an etch-a-sketch; it's fun for a while. It's just genuinely frustrating to see what the punk scene can get used for, and used *to*, whether it be stepping stone or tasting spoon. And of course, I just don't like meatheads.

Endnotes: Although it was kinda fun in that petty way to see Mark McCoy and Martin Sorrendeguy pick at each other in the letters column the last couple of months, I realize now it was all just a show and wish the best of luck to both of them for a swift recovery after that accident.

Also, thanks to Tim in Burlington for responding to my column a couple of months back ("How Much Art I Can Take"). I kind of wonder, though, if that letter was a joke or not. Tim, do you really think we should devote more time in these columns to art vs. politics? In my column I more intended to illustrate that punk rock could embody the two ways of thinking/acting in collusion. I don't think changing a red to a blue is a political reaction at all, as you seemed to be suggesting with that Philip Guston quote; rather, I was implying that the dichotomy is an insecure projection, like most "intellectual/actual" separations. Once again, like genre: all bullshit. You also said the column was glib and underthought, which is totally true, or I wouldn't have to clarify myself.

Alright dudes, with that, I gotta jet. I'm like hella stoned.

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Who would've fucking guessed that coming through on last month's promise to report on The LA Shakedown would be an exercise in self-restraint? Various accounts of this debacle are all over the place, so you I'm sure you can find plenty of horror stories elsewhere. Needless to say, the event didn't go as planned and the entire thing reeked of "trucker bullshit." I don't really wanna revisit the negative, but I'm sure there are plenty of others ready and willing to vent. I will say that the only thing that kept me from completely blowing a gasket was being able to catch sets by the MYSTERY GIRLS, HUNCHES, FLASH EXPRESS and THE FUSE! For all the dumb shit that went down, I'm glad to say that these bands more than lived up to their end of the bargain. There's your report...on with the wax!

I'm gonna switch things up this month and start with the "Old Shit." Why??? Because I simply can't wait to dish the goods on the GEEKS! The Geeks were a band from Marin County, CA who played and recorded in various incarnations from 1962 to 1982. In their entire career, they released only a 45 and a LP, both of which were recorded in the late 70s/early 80s punk era. However, the Geeks' sound is far from typical of that period: this is some wildly inventive and experimental stuff, incorporating elements of jazz, rock, and a fierce punk/DIY attitude. While their self-released original records remain hard to come by, S-S Records has just released the "Dreamland In Machineland" b/w "Hey Wreck" 45. Yup, you guessed it: two unreleased Geeks tunes from 1982! I'm happy to report that you obscure singles hounds have a new slab actually worth hunting down! Seriously, it's crazy that shit this great has gone unheard for this long. "Hey Wreck" is a tune in the vein of the finest *No New York* CONTORTIONS contributions, while "Dreamland In Machineland" rumbles along with an incredibly warped (and a tad snotty) sound. This record is definitely not for everyone, but the geek in me flipped for it (sorry, couldn't resist).

Here's a boot/reissue that should be immediately recognizable to the scum out there: the LATIN DOGS "Warning!" 7"EP. What you get here is some snotty Midwestern hardcore from '82. Six tunes that the collector in you will shit over...at least for a spin or two.

I hate to admit this, but I had made a conscious decision to stay away from the *Hyped2Death* series and its various offshoots. This self-imposed rule wasn't decided out of anger or malice, but out of fear: I was afraid that I'd get sucked in and end up throwing all my dough out at a bunch of CD-R compilations. Of course...I caved in last month and I'm in big fucking trouble. Just when you thought that there was nothing left to be done with the whole *Bloodstains* and *Killed By Death* exploitation game, *Hyped2Death* has come along and unearthed a bunch of killer shit! I'd recommend the *Messthetics* series, if only because it features tons of little-known acts doing things slightly more adventurous than your average '77-'82 *KBD* bands.

There are a few new boot/reissue LPs worthy of discussion this month. I suppose the one that'll attract the most attention is a live MINOR THREAT boot LP, *Sometimes Good Guys Don't Wear White,* recorded at a DC show in 1983. I shrugged off initial reports of bad sound and decided to give it a listen myself. Baaaaaaaaaad fucking idea! Baaaaaaaaaad fucking sound! There are only a few semi-decent moments, and they certainly don't make up for the price tag. I know some of you poor souls out there will simply *have to* score one. Don't say I didn't warn you...

Moving quickly from dreadful to mandatory, *Saturday's Kids* is a collection of demos and outtakes from the JAM! You get demos and Peel Sessions from the golden period, '77-'79! This LP boasts exclusively great sounding and unreleased studio shit that any Jam fan would be bonkers to pass on. It's great to hear different versions of these classic tunes, not to mention the finally getting a glimpse of these greats in their formative stages. What boots should be!

Even though it's a few months old, I feel obligated to point you toward *I Have A Date*, the complete recordings of THE SIMPLETONES! Reissued on Re-Force Records out of Germany, this LP is pretty much one-stop shopping in terms of Southern CA beach punk, and it's a hell of a lot better than most of what's coming out of Southern CA these days.

Another old one (supposedly released in 2001, although I haven't seen it before) that has recently come to my attention is Incognito Records' complete collection of the SPYS, a Canadian band from 1979. It never ceases to amaze me how many full length records pop up by bands whose entire output consists of one 45! Shit like this is usually best left unheard, but this LP includes some flat-out *killer* unreleased demos, not to mention their only 45, "Machine Shop" b/w "Underground." Sure, throwing a "reunion" live set on here is a serious demerit, but the studio material makes up for it.

While I'd love to sit and chat about old shit all day, there's a fucking truckload of new shit to inform you of. I'm up to my fucking neck in new singles this month, so this rundown will take a while. Naturally, I feel I should start with the ones that'll cause the most headaches for collectors. Italy's Solid Sex Lovie Doll Records is a label that strikes fear in the hearts of many, as they've got a serious knack for releasing incredibly limited singles by some of the best bands around (the LOST SOUNDS, DIRTBOMBS, and KING LOUIE ONE MAN BAND to name a few). This month, they've got three garage punk slabs you'll be searching for: the BLACKS (the great garage band from Sweden, their final release ever), SCAT RAG BOOSTERS, and JOHNNY CANCER ONE MAN BAND/SKIP JENSEN. All of these are sure to come in ridiculously small runs and feature a few sleeve variations. That's all well and good, but SSLDR has yet to drop a dud, so the tunes will probably be more impressive than anything else. SSLDR is rumored to be releasing a HUNCHES single...as soon as I hear it's available, you will too. Good luck!

2003 is looking like it's gonna be a fantastic year for HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE fans. Having just seen the domestic release of their fantastic album *Idiota Hyperactiva* and the *Adulterer Oriented Rock* singles compilation (both CD only on Coldfront), Wrench Records delivers their second HFOS single, the *Patmos Or Bust* 7"EP! The wild Swedes have revamped their sound a bit, coming across a little like the earliest and best material by the DAMNED! Of course they're still holding tight to their

trademark spastic'n'frantic tempo and crude subject matter, so there is absolutely no reason to think that they've gone soft. I flip over all HFOS records, but I must say that this was a welcome surprise that flat-out blew me away. A monster of a single and definitely not to be missed!

NEON KING KONG has finally checked in with another single! It's too bad that they've already imploded, but I can't say that I'm surprised. Regardless, Vinyl Dog Records has let loose their death rattle, "Get What's Going Around" b/w "There's A Party." You know the program: short, great and sure to disappear quickly.

In my opinion, the HOSPITALS are one of the best new bands in the country. I saw this Portland, OR two-piece live a few months back, and they pretty much destroyed everything in sight: breaking bottles, microphones, eardrums…you name it, they broke it. They've finally managed to put that havoc down on wax, releasing the *Again and Again* 7"EP on Future Primitive Records. Grab one of these singles for a sneak peek at their upcoming In The Red Records full length.

It's taken a while, but I've finally found a new Japanese band to get jazzed about: THE STAND BY ME! "In My Car" b/w "My Sweet Life" has just hit the US, although the sleeve boasts a 2001 release. Released on the appropriately titled 1977 Records, The Stand By Me's sound reflects the current running through most of the new Japanese punk bands: a diehard devotion to UK mod and power pop. I must say that they do both incredibly well here. If you are a fan of the new breed of Japanese bands, score one of these ASAP.

The FLASH EXPRESS have *finally* released a follow-up to their great debut on Revenge Records. "Ride the Flash Express" b/w "Feel These Blues" picks up right where things left off, boasting two soulful tunes. Hopefully the wait for the LP won't be quite as long. You can score a copy of this from Head Line Records, a label/record store from LA

The LIDS *Too Late* 7"EP, released on Die Slaughterhaus Records, is a fine debut in the vein of classic Rip Off bands like the SPASTICS and LOLI AND THE CHONES. All the right ingredients are here: totally lo-fi production, upfront guitars, snotty girl/guy shouting and bare bones sleeve art. This record screams trash! Along with the CARBONAS and the BLACK LIPS, the Lids are making Atlanta a city to watch.

Here's one for all the OBLIVIANS fans. For those unaware, Mr. Jack Yarber can now be heard in the COOL JERKS, who have just followed up their great LP with a single, "Whole Wide World" b/w "For A Little While." I'm one of those folks who go after just about any Oblivians/COMPULSIVE GAMBLERS related project, so pardon me if you've got no soul. Released on Misprint Records, home of VIVA L'AMERICAN DEATH RAY MUSIC (or just plain ol' American Death Ray).

The BLOWTOPS have yet another new release! The *Surgeon's Hands* 7"EP, on Reptilian Records, picks up right where their *Black Static* album left off: dark, driving punk rock with ample amounts of wall-to-wall buzz. Not as good as some of their previous efforts, but fans of the band certainly won't be let down.

Enough with the fucking singles already! *Shapes Of Venus* is the second LP by the CLONE DEFECTS…and it's fucking amazing! I've always been a huge fan of this band, but this completely blows all their other shit away! This is some seriously primitive punk, clearly borrowing equal amounts from the ELECTRIC EELS and DEAD BOYS schools. It's out now on In The Red, as is a 45 featuring the title track and a non-LP B-side, "Stick My Knife." These are the first truly essential records of 2003, no doubt about it.

In The Red has also released the debut long player by A FEAST OF SNAKES, a new combo featuring James Arthur (FIREWORKS, NECESSARY EVILS) and Alex Cuervo (BLACKTOP, NOW TIME DELEGATION). With those folks on board, you pretty much know what you're gonna get: great bluesy garage punk. You might recognize A Feast of Snakes from their debut 7"EP (where they covered SAMHAIN!) on Dropkick from last year.

Fans of THE NO-TALENTS can rejoice, as both Lili Z. and Cecilia have new bands! Lili's new band, VOLT, has just released their debut s/t 12" on Polly Magoo Records. Like a lot of the past crop of garage/'77 punks, Lili has gone electronic/synth crazy. Fear not, there's still plenty of punk in there. Cecilia now fronts OPERATION S, who just released their debut single on Cecilia's own Wild Wild Records. I'm pleased to report that she's ditched the loungey French pop and has returned to a full-on punk sound. Both releases are French imports, so check out places like Know Crap and Underground Medicine for copies.

Dropkick Records has done the world a huge favor by finally releasing the MYSTERY GIRLS album on vinyl! Originally released as a CD on Trickknee Productions in 2002, the Mystery Girls album garnered enough attention to not only get In The Red after the band, but KIM FOWLEY was all over 'em as well! These guys are the real fucking deal, and they're barely out of their teens!

Dirtnap Records is back at it with two high profile releases. The first is *Dirtnap Across The Northwest*, a 31-band CD compilation. With the exception of A-FRAMES and the HOSPITALS, I'm pretty sure every Northwest band that's worth a damn is on this puppy. Pretty much every Dirtnap band is present, and the standout contributions are from the INTELLIGENCE, HUNCHES, ELECTRIC EYE, POPULAR SHAPES and the SPITS, who check in with a rap song that is so fucking funny it hurts.

Perhaps a bigger story than the comp is the return of the BRIEFS to Dirtnap. I'm not sure of the specifics surrounding this whole thing, but it appears that they've already parted ways with those Bizkit barons, Interscope Records…before they even released anything! What the fuck? Regardless, *Off The Charts* is out, and I can't say that I'm impressed. I really dug *Hit After Hit*, but this new one? Let's just say the hits are few and far between.

While we're on the subject of "the big leagues," everyone seems to be going apeshit over the FINGER. I hate to say it, but that fucking record kicks total ass! Fortunately, I haven't had an opportunity to hear any of this ADAMS guy's other stuff. I don't know shit about the guy, except that he's some "alt-country" (whatever the fuck that means) hero or something. Ignorance is bliss: *We Are Fuck You* is nuts BLACK FLAG worship that must be heard to be believed. The vinyl is out of print and already fetching quite a bit on eBay, but a reissue is supposedly on the way. Take that, eBay assholes!

I think that about does it for records this month. Before I check out, I'd like to wish Greg and Rip Off Records a happy tenth anniversary! Now I know people have a wide range of opinions on this subject, but if a label has released records by the REGISTRATORS, INFECTIONS, TEENGENERATE, RIP OFFS and other greats, they truly deserve congratulations. Without that stuff, this column would be a whole lot fucking shorter, as many of these bands owe a huge debt to the acts Rip Off has released. Here's to ten more…See you next month!

<<Mitch Cardwell>> <<letsgethurt@yahoo.com>>

OK, I hope you all have been following the letter column lately, wherein our friends at *Plastic Bomb* zine in Germany have been apolitical and just in it for the Oi are Vulture Rock and Haunted Town. I've dealt with Vulture Rock and I thought John was actually a really nice guy, although I later stopped dealing with him when I took Neil's side in a falling out he had with Neil of Tribal War. However, Vulture Rock recently reissued the Youth Defense League CD. There is no doubt YDL was a nazi band and very mixed up with Nazi skinhead violence in NYC in the late 80s. Haunted Town has reissued some stuff by Best Defense. This band was dodgy as fuck too—they had the Cross of Odin on their demo and a big nazi skinhead following, although I don't recall any outright nazi lyrics. Either way, I can't possibly see anyone re-releasing this stuff for the music. Both bands are absolutely third rate. So why would anyone reissue this stuff except to promote the band's ideology?

OK, so with this out of the way, let's talk about what's going on in hardcore in the Upper Midwest. This isn't really a scene report because I'm leaving out a lot of bands, but this is just what I've seen lately. If you think I'm doing your scene a disservice, compile your own report and send it in. I'm in a band that's been playing a lot of shows around the region and hardcore is going very strong around here despite very little national attention.

The bands here don't get as good distribution, don't get to play as many bigger music towns, and aren't in the spotlight very often. However, I think you'll find that Midwestern bands are also less commercial, not as trendy, and often either more original or more true to the roots than bands in other parts of the country. I'm not out to put down the scenes on the coasts or anything; I like bands from all over. But these are just some things I've observed playing small town garages and basements to the truly diehard kids who come out in the middle of winter when touring national acts won't come within hundreds of miles of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa.

In my opinion, the best hardcore bands in the Upper Midwest right now are Holding On, Modern Life is War, and 14 or Fight.

Holding On are from Minneapolis and play raging fast hardcore which is a pretty good mix of late 80s youth crew and early 80s US hardcore. They have two full lengths, a 7" and two split 7"s out. Their latest LP is on Bridge 9, they will be touring with Modern Life is War this spring.

Modern Life is War hail from some small town in Iowa and they have released just one 7" EP so far. They are recording an LP for Martyr Records soon. (Martyr released one of the Holding On split 7"s) Modern Life is War is one of the most intense hardcore bands I've seen lately. Their music is raw and powerful, yet melodic without being sappy. They use two guitars to better effect than almost any bands I've heard in the last decade to create a layered and textured sound that is still powerful and raging. I want to compare them to Articles of Faith but they have too much youth crew in them to make that stick. Check these guys out!

14 or Fight is a new band from Chicago with members of Charles Bronson and MK Ultra. To tell the truth I already like them more than both of those bands. All they have out so far is a demo, which is sold out, but they will be releasing a 7" on Lengua Armada soon. Powerful 80s-influenced hardcore, once again mixing early 80s thrash with Youth Crew sounds. Intelligent and topical lyrics, a band you should not miss under any circumstances.

OK, those three are my top picks, now for all the other great bands going down around here. Punch in the Face from Chicago are pretty known from their 7" on Lengua Armada, fast, aggro hardcore with member of Bronson/Ruination and Dearborn SS. I Attack from Chicago play fast hardcore, ex-Los Crudos, they have a demo tape out, not sure what else is in store for them. Reaccion from Chicago play political hardcore with m/f vocals and are ex-Sin Dios. They have a demo out. Plan of Attack from Chicago are a tough youth crew hardcore band with a 7" out and have just got a record deal going with Organized Crime Records. Kung Fu Rick are pretty well known, with a new LP on 625, but are breaking up. HeWhoCorrupts are from Chicagoland and play super fast grindcore. They have a slew of split 7"s out and are getting some attention from the world grindcore scene.

Despite, from Wisconsin, continue their crustcore campaign; not sure about any new stuff from these guys. Words that Burn is a new band from Wisconsin with ex-Remission members. Fast grinding crustcore. DisCider, from Madison, have a 7" out on First Blood Family Records and play brutal crustcore. Blackwall Hitch, from Milwaukee, have a self-released 7" and play awesome early 80s style HC with some youth crew influence mixed in. Since By Man from Milwaukee play sorta electronic hardcore like Song of Zarathustra or 7 days of Samsara, they just put out and LP on Revelation. 7 days of Samsara is supposedly still going but I haven't heard anything new from them for a while. Copeater and Death First are Wisconsin grindcore stalwarts, I think both have demos. Weaving the Death Bag is a metal-tinged HC band from Wisconsin with ex-members of USV, Defacto Oppression, and Asinine Solution. They have a 7" out and toured last summer with Asschapel. Human Order are a crust band from Wisconsin with a 7" out, they recently toured.

The Blinding Light are from South Dakota and play metallic hardcore maybe like Converge (I'm not an expert on this stuff) with ex-members of Threadbare and Floodplain.

Winnipeg has a ripping hardcore scene with Dead Stock Crusher who play full-speed-ahead crushing hardcore which sounds to me like a mix between 80s thrash and old Japanese thrash bands. They have a demo CD out. Head Hits Concrete have a split 10" out on Putrid Filth and a 7" from a few years back. They play punishing grindcore. Guns, Liquor and Whores from Winnipeg play fast 80s style HC and just put out a 10" on Putrid Filth Conspiracy. They have lost their guitar player and are weighing their options to find a new axeman and continue or not. Insaniacs from Winnipeg have a CD out and play great late 70s/early 80s Southern California style punk. They would be right at home on a *Live at the Masque* comp. Comeback Kid from Winnipeg play great youth crew HC but I'm not too keen on their Christian HC thing.

Showering Ashes from Iowa City have a 7" out and play dark hardcore maybe like His Hero is Gone. Black Market Fetus from Des Moines have a few 7"s and splits. They play a mix of grindcore and D-beat crust that seems to be leaning further and further towards grind every time I see them. CHUD from Des Moines are a cross between an 80s HC band like Negative Approach and a stand up comedy act. Don't miss this gang.

OK, my home state of Minnesota has a ton of bands right now. If you are curious about the scene in the Twin Cities Metro Area I urge you to pick up the new compilation, *No Hold Back All Attack*. This is a triple LP/double CD comp with 54 TC bands running the full spectrum from '77 punk to brutal grind. Too many bands to list in this one column but most all of the bands mentioned below have tracks on this comp and more.

Any Last Words from St. Paul play fast hardcore like Youth of Today or No For an Answer; raw, fast, and raging. They have a demo and will do a 7" soon on my label, Havoc Records. Damage Deposit is my band; we play fast hardcore which is a mix of 80s thrash and youth crew. We have a demo and a 7" coming soon on Havoc Records. Cutthroat Hoods are a pretty unique sounding band with ex-members of Assrash and the Murderers. Playing a mix of metal and chaos punk they call "scrap metal," they have a 7" out and have just recorded an LP, which I think will be on Rodent Popsicle. Path of Destruction is a tough hardcore/crust band heavily influenced by Poison Idea. With ex-members of Assrash, Code 13, Calloused and Pontius Pilate. They have a 7" coming soon on Havoc Records. Scorned are a crust core band from Minneapolis with a split, a 7", and an LP out. Guitarist Kerry runs local label Sin Fronteras Records, which has put out 7"s by Path of Destruction as well as a ton of South American bands. Provoked is another crustcore band who released a split 7" with Path of Destruction. XdevastatorX is a sXe moshcore band from the Twin Cities, they have a demo CD out. Too Pure to Die is also an sXe moshcore band originally from Iowa, now based in the Twin Cities. Season of Fire broke up, but are doing a posthumous tour of Canada this month. Martyr AD are the reigning metal/HC dark lords. They have an LP out and a record deal with Victory, but no drummer or vocalist. Somebody play drums for these guys! Olsen Twin Suicide from Mankato play metallic hardcore and have a demo out. Bodies Lay Broken are a grindcore powerhouse with a sound reminiscent of early Carcass. They have and LP coming soon on Necropolis Records. Death Truck is a dark HC band influenced by stuff like From Ashes Rise and Tragedy, they have a self released 7". Misery are still going strong and are about to celebrate their 15th Anniversary with a blow out gig. They are heading into the studio soon to record a new LP. Not sure what label will be releasing it. Stillborn was a crusty hardcore band with members of Pontius Pilate and Whorehouse of Representatives. They broke up but released a 7" and have recorded another that will be released soon. Onward to Mayhem are threatening to get back together if their guitar player survives the next gulf war. They have a discography CD coming this summer. Song of Zarathustra broke up. Resolve is a new crustcore band with members of State of Fear and Detestation. They are touring soon. Ass is a noisy crust punk band who have demo out. Season of Fire play metallic hardcore similar to Harvest. They broke up but have released two CDEPs on Goodfella Records from Belgium. *Profane Existence* zine is back in action and has two new issues out. The same crew also runs Blackened Distribution where you can get the latest crust stuff and *PE* zine. I do a label called Havoc Records, but there's been enough name dropping in this column already. Finally 1-2-Go Crew are a straight edge rap crew doing rap versions of sXe hardcore classics. They have a demo out, which should come out as a 7" soon. If you are interested in the Twin Cities bands check out the *No Hold Back All Attack* double LP. Available at your local punk record store or order direct from Havoc, 1%, THD, Ebullition, Sound Idea or other mail order distros.

OK, that's Upper Midwest hardcore the way I see it. I'm sure I left out a ton of bands and I didn't even get started on punk bands like Dillinger Four, Subversives, Soviettes, Sweet Jap, etc.

but that is the stuff of another column and hardcore is what I know best. Keep it real, support your scene.

It's a beautiful fucking day in the neighborhood.

The front entrance to my apartment building opens to a printer and a bail bonds business framed by dark folded clouds streaked with blue. The street is narrow and alley like, one of three lanes across from San Francisco's Hall of Justice on Bryant Street, south of Market. My flat is the top floor in a three storey Victorian, or more properly, an Edwardian, which shares the block with light industry, a bar, bail bonds, the DA's offices and yuppie "live-work" lofts. Once an epicenter for the dot com boom, the whole SOMA neighborhood is now severely depressed. A penthouse loft has been for sale on the block for the past six months, the price dropping from 600K to 449K, and it still hasn't sold. It's hard times for the netveau riche and one of those extremely rare things in San Francisco, a renter's market.

I've taken the day off work, called in sick, so it's a business day for much of the rest of the city. There's a string of black and whites in front of, and lots of folks going up and down the front stairs to the Hall of Justice, all about the business of crime and punishment. I head in the opposite direction, toward Brannan where I turn east. The neighborhood's incongruities continue with a solid old brick building housing the Showplace Motor Works across the street from a tiny ground floor startup called Digitalix in a new hybrid stucco and glass loft/apartment complex.

I like to walk around and get to know my neighborhood, wherever I live. I walked regularly all over Oakland, and I remember my strolls around Lake Merritt with a particular fondness. Since moving to west bay I've been delving into this sprawling ill-defined part of the city. It was in the process of being carved up and served on a platter to a voracious new stratum of dot yuppie scum when the economy tanked as Junior Bush took office. The area referred to by the overbroad label South of Market was seeing its old school commerce and industry, raw nightlife and secluded side street residences transformed into exclusive high rise lofts, new economy startups, expensive restaurants, shops, galleries and boutiques, *ad nauseam*. The collapse of the e-bubble, which in many ways triggered the wider economic crisis we're in now, put the breaks to this changeover.

There's still a fuck of a lot of building going on in the area, but all of it was started before the e-downturn and current deepening recession. The lofts that are opening up are struggling to get even half occupancy nowadays. The owners who built them don't want to lower the selling price of premium real estate, especially considering that the property was purchased and the construction contracted also at a premium, when the general economy was still booming. Landlords of choice property are loath to lower rents, in turn because of rent control. Get a bunch of renters in at too low a rate and the landlords are stuck when the economy begins to improve. At least twice searching for an apartment south of Market, I ran into dot commers who, having bought the house to be in the eye of San Francisco's e-hurricane, now had to relocate across the country to keep or get a job. They were still hoping to get top dollar renting out their property, even though they were no longer in the driver's seat.

While the gentrification of SOMA has ground to a halt then, there's the distinct possibility that residential and commercial properties will be kept vacant on purpose, with their owners willing to take what they hope is a short-term loss rather than sell or rent too low. The character of the neighborhood was scarred, but by no means overwhelmed by the economically routed yuppie invasion however. High vacancies might yet inspire takeover efforts by affordable housing advocates and the homeless, and the welcome respite from yuppification might yet motivate anti-gentrification efforts.

Today, I'm on my standard walk, which I do for the exercise and the view, and not so much to explore where I live. There's some variation built into even my standard walk, so I cross Sixth, then Brannan to a landscaped public access path between a roaring Highway 280 and a large torn up fenced-off vacant lot on the verge of construction. It's about as winter as it gets in the Bay Area, with billowy rain clouds sliding majestically across a chilly industrial sky. This access is often the sight of homeless encampments with shopping carts piled high, but today there are just moldering wet leaves and scrawny patches of grass beneath the bare bones trees.

The street I wind up on, Bluxome, is a side street particular to the light industrial nature to much of south of Market. Large buildings and warehouses front on Brannan and Townsend, with their loading docks, garage doors and industrial entries on Bluxome. Over time, many of these backsides became the fronts to businesses as buildings and warehouses were subdivided. Lots of beautiful brickwork here, and I like the mural graffiti on the Stink Fish building. Bluxome runs like this for two blocks, and the only atrocity is the monolithic concrete members-only San Francisco Tennis Club. Painted a hideous green and white, the Tennis Club squats the whole block from Brannan to Bluxome along Fifth all the way down to the fire station. It's ugly and impenetrable, and ironically enough, its various inset street-level access doors have become sleeping alcoves and public toilets for the homeless. South of Market doesn't get much of San Francisco's legendary fog, so during hot days in the city the tennis set like to prop these doors open to get some relief. I like to think they get what they deserve.

The west side of Fourth down to the CalTrain station is under construction; shops and residences for yuppies who are fast fleeing the neighborhood. It's part of the peripheral building around a monster construction effort that involves the two blocks bounded by Townsend and Berry, and Fourth and Third that promises to bring a Safeway and a Borders to SOMA. Oh joy! These two blocks, one of girders and cranes in skeletal relief against the clouds and the other of newly finished almost completely vacant buildings, in turn are part of a much more grandiose scheme that calls for the eventual development of what scumfuck realtors are now calling Mission Bay (both sides of the Mission Creek Marina, incorporating lower South of Market and most of China Basin). The plan calls for a modern industrial park with medical and biotech research and development facilities alongside chic city residences and upscale mini malls. This economic downturn has put a crimp in those schemes for sure. I only wish it could drive a stake through the plan's heart. That would require a full-blown depression.

Frankly, my route along Fourth to the Maloney Bridge has become a dangerous obstacle course with all the detoured vehicle traffic and diverted pedestrian sidewalks, screwy temporary signal lights, plus lots of angry auto congestion due to said constricted and redirected traffic. I take a moment at the CalTrain station to watch the noisy construction across the street and shrug off a couple of homeless beggars, then walk through the airy, mostly naturally lit train station past more homeless to the mass of orange and black signs, orange and white plastic construction barricades and yellow tape piled around King and Fourth, ostensibly to make things safer for people on foot. The N Judah muni train hasn't been running to the King and Fourth station due to track improvements that have compounded the congestion. The white picto walking man appears, but the cars keep coming. I lean down to pick up a decent sized chunk of asphalt torn up with all the construction, and I heft it visibly as I step out into the crosswalk.

Nothing like a two by four to get the mule's attention.

The drivers stop, but they're not nice about it. I see one muttering a curse. Another a couple of cars back even honks his horn. I walk across, bouncing the rock in my hand to the scowl on the face of the lead driver. The chunk of roadway makes my point, but just to be polite I point to the pedestrian signal. With my middle finger. I toss the rock back into the street once I reach the other side.

Aside from figuring I'm a pretty aggressive pedestrian, I guess you can tell I'm not much of a peace and love kind of guy. And I'm not particularly patient with people who want to hold me to some "higher" pacifistic standard simply because I'm against Junior Bush's world war against international terrorism as well as his particular grudge match with Iraq's Saddam Hussein. Like most folks, including most of the folks who attended the various mass anti-war rallies over the past 3-4 months, I'm not an absolutist as far as violence is concerned. I don't think resolving problems with violence generally is a very good idea, but I think there is a time and place when a violent response is not just appropriate but necessary. My standards are a bit different from your average American, as well as your average demonstrator is all. I think

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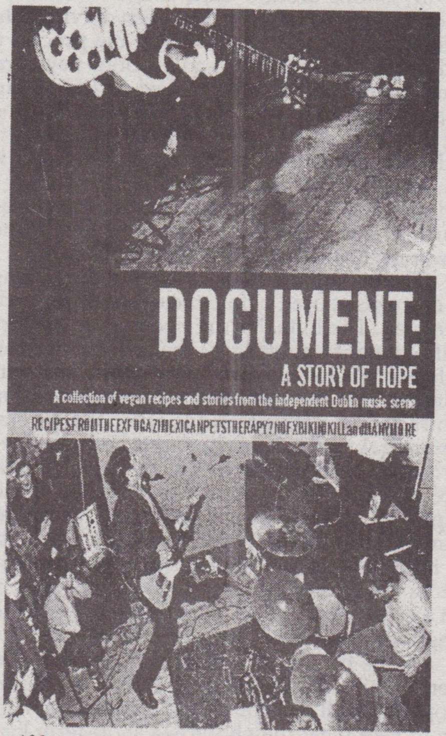

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working class warfare against the *bourgeoisie* is justified almost any time and place, whereas wars based on jingoistic nationalism and chauvinistic patriotism are completely indefensible.

I've made no bones that I support both the tens of thousands in New York out of a half million anti-war protesters on February 15 who defied the local ban on marching with hundreds of illegal feeder marches forming parallel extralegal demonstrations, resulting in over 300 arrests, and the thousands in San Francisco who broke away from the quarter million anti-war march and rally on February 16 with a much more violent, anti-capitalist agenda in mind, resulting in over 40 arrests. Support, because I wasn't at either event. I'd intended to go to the SF protest when it was on the 15th, and planned other things accordingly, so when the anti-war event was postponed a day to accommodate a local Chinese New Year celebration I was unable to change my commitments. The whole being responsible thing I discussed last column. [If you want the details of either unpermitted action, I recommend the indymedia.org sites, the main one as well as SF and NYC sites.] My support for civil disobedience slash direct action (NYC) and direct action slash street fighting (SF) has stepped over into personal participation in the past, and undoubtedly will in the future. No hypocrisy here, because I don't believe in nonviolence. Indeed, I would argue that I'm being perfectly consistent with my rather absolutist "no war but the class war" position.

I can see the green gray water of Mission Creek Marina as I approach the Peter R. Maloney Bridge, ruffled by gusts of wind. This narrow inlet from the bay supports a houseboat community to my right (which China Basin developers say they want to keep), behind not just the Maloney but also the Lefty O'Doul Bridge. Water access is required, yet the clearance under the bridges is barely enough for a motorboat to pass now. At high tide, the salty water laps the bridges' bottom girders. The Maloney and O'Doul are both single-leaf bascule bridges with massive concrete counterweights so that they can cantilever up a section of roadway to allow boats to sail the channel. Built as the Fourth Street Bridge in 1916, the Maloney is definitely the smaller of the two, lifting only three narrow lanes plus sidewalks.

I turn left at the bridge, through metal gates to an 8 to 6 public access walkway next to the China Basin Landing center. The company that built the complex wanted exclusive control of the waterfront in exchange for developing it, but was forced to provide limited public access because the waterfront is essentially a public trust managed by the city. Notice the slight of hand; the curtailing of public access in the guise of securing it. Eight to six is not 24/7. And for all the clean concrete and fastidious landscaping, bolted down wooden benches and arching gazebos, the walkway is kind of creepy. The center is a McCarthy-Cook Technology Campus and very conspicuous cameras monitor all the entrances on the public access side. Given the positioning of the cameras, anybody taking the public access walkway is also being filmed. That doesn't stop bums from taking advantage of the fine wooden benches under the gazebos for some sleep, camping out even with the threat of rain.

The winter color, liquid sound and sharp smell of the bay begin to calm me as I walk the public access, ignoring the cameras. The layers of silent ruin across the channel, abandoned Southern Pacific rail yards, pylons and broken docks green with moss, retaining walls of decaying wood and sliding stone, contribute to the calm. A log floats in the briny inlet with an appropriately perched seagull. The bay makes smooth lapping noises against the walkway's solid concrete buttresses. Fishing birds dive for food; resurfacing to ride the cold green water. I've seen a seal cavorting in this channel between the two bridges, nose, whiskers and flipper breaking the surface before it raced away under the murky water, to pop up again some distance down the inlet with a loud splash.

The whole point of my standard walk is to take in as much of the waterfront as possible within an hour, so I grab the China Basin Landing boardwalk whenever possible. It pisses me off, converting the city controlled waterfront into privately controlled public access, and I can imagine this will be the model for the rest of Mission Creek Marina development. It's a deliberate confounding of words and their meanings, giving away the commons to private enterprise yet still calling it public. Something like this happens when we talk about opposition to war on Iraq or resistance to the war on terror.

As I argued above, most folks who attended the various mass protests over the past three months are not against all wars all the time, and so the current upsurge should be properly called an anti-war movement. A segment of the liberal-to-left political spectrum (from liberal church and traditional pacifist groups to various and sundry social democratic organizations and parties) has an interest in redefining this growing political discontent in using the term "peace movement," as if to argue that those who protest share not just the negative—opposition to Junior Bush's war on Iraq and/or world war on terror—but also some positive vision of a peaceful future, whatever that might be.

That such a common vision simply does not exist doesn't phase these folks, who argue as if from common sense "well, we all want peace, don't we?" When asked to define peace, the lowest-common-denominator response seems to be along the lines of a slogan often shouted at mass anti-war demonstrations: "money for jobs (or schools or homes or whatever), not for war." Peace then is what we have now (as of March 13, 2003 the US still hasn't started bombing Iraq back to the stone age), only with different spending priorities. Peace is spending more on social programs and less on the Pentagon. In that case, I definitely do not want peace, nor am I protesting for the benefit of some lame assed peace movement.

Capitalism is the day-to-day assault of the rich owning class upon the poor working class. Capitalism is misery, want and exploitation for growing numbers of people to benefit and privilege a tiny elite. Capitalism, pure and simple, is warfare by other means. I'm not interested in peace, or in a peace movement that doesn't seek to take down capitalism, not coincidentally one of the main causes of war in the modern world.

I hope that's clear. I call the current disorder in the streets—most of it peaceful but some of it not—an anti-war movement because many of us participating in that movement are not interested in "peace as usual." I suspect that those who try to mislabel this a peace movement do so so that folks who don't go along "peacefully" with the way they want to run things can be isolated, even turned over to the police as was implied by Medea Benjamin after Seattle 1999. Well, the good news is that the anti-war movement is fast achieving the uncontrollable diversity that comes with mass participation. The February 15-16 demos were probably the biggest yet, and were sponsored by a wide variety of lefty front and mainstream coalitions. Civil disobedience and nonviolent direct action are becoming commonplace at such events, and direct autonomous street actions, to include black bloc tactics, are coming into their own. This anti-war movement should reach a peak when the bombs start falling on Iraq. The first important test, at least for the American anti-war movement, will come when US troops come under fire, and some of that fire is chemical or biological. It shouldn't dampen opposition outside the US, but the American anti-war movement will definitely experience a decline as folks rally behind "our boys."

If the war is short and relatively "clean" vis-à-vis US casualties, with most bets being that it will be, the wind is taken out of the sails of the anti-war movement and it's a whole new game. If shit happens, if Saddam holds on for weeks or pulls a bin Laden and disappears, if Iraq manages to attack Israel and draw it into the conflict, if Iraq breaks apart and the Turks or the Iranians enter the picture, if terrorist attacks in and on the US escalate, all bets are off. Given how widespread and organized the anti-war movement is now, before a shooting war even starts, it's a safe bet in my book that things will get real interesting if the shooting war becomes protracted.

I walk across the Mission Creek Marina on the girder supported wooden walkway that's the Lefty O'Doul Bridge sidewalk, make a dash across the street before the Terry A. Francois detour that Third Street has become due to more road construction, and proceed back across the Marina as it flows into McCovey Cove, where Barry Bonds likes to dunk his home game homers. The bridge's black girders and concrete counterweight are massive close up, intended as they are to lift five lanes and two sidewalks. I catch one of the street construction workers in orange on the bridge baiting a crab pot with chunks of fish, a fish head giving me the fisheye.

"Caught me ten crab yesterday," he says with a toothy grin.

The only sure bet on my standard walk is the stretch of public access waterfront alongside PacBell Stadium and the jetty that runs the south side of the South Beach Harbor marina. This is all true public access; open twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. I've come here at midnight, for one of the most tranquil experiences under a night sky choked with stars, invisible waves slapping against ballpark and harbor construction.

Nothing's happening at the ballpark. It's broad stairways,

expansive tiers and massive stadium seating are all empty, except for what looks like a small tour in progress. I can see the scoreboard beneath racing clouds, and a little bit of the ghastly advertising, the top of a coke bottle with bubbles. I've been here when the whole place was packed, folks hanging off every railing, billowing clouds of cigarette smoke, noisy crowds moving up and down the stairs, lots of people thronging the walkway, the smell of hot dogs and onions, and McCovey Cove carpeted with every manner of floatation device and odd individual hoping to catch a homer. You can enjoy a ground view of any game from the free pauper's boxes midway off the boardwalk.

I've walked past this limited ground level view of the baseball field, only to see it tarped and covered with chairs for a Rolling Stones concert, or sculpted with mounds of dirt for a motorcross competition. When Cirque de Soleil was in town, they set up their swirled yellow and blue fantasy tents in the vast parking lots across a now much wider inlet from the ballpark, the other shore a gray line of breaker rocks becoming old school warehouses on old school piers with a large moored ship or two. The bay churns off in the distance, dark under rain clouds. I walk along the edge of that distance, passing empty docks, passing a precise grove of palm trees rising from concrete, passing the statue of a seal balancing a ball.

Two clusters of fishermen hang around the entrance to the south jetty, sharing the publicly provided sink for cleaning fish. These folks look like they fish for the food, and I wonder at the level of toxins and pollutants they consume eating bay catch. Row after row of sailboats, motorboats, cabin boats, small yachts, all kinds of boats throw up a forest of masts and towers to my left as I walk the jetty. A squat drab line of piers and warehouses delineates the marina's northern boundary, dwarfed immediately by the sure lines and sweeping arcs of San Francisco's side to the Bay Bridge as it curves gracefully to Yerba Buena and Treasure Islands. The East Bay side of the bridge isn't nearly as attractive, though it's line of motion takes my eyes to the port of Oakland with the prominent crane arrays, and to downtown Oakland, such as it is.

I miss Oakland, and find it strange looking at my old home, crisp after rain and the promise of more, from this side of the bay. The jetty doesn't take me much closer to where I used to live, forming the mouth to this marina with a concrete breakwater running north-south against the bay. There are six public wooden benches facing into China Basin along the jetty, three of which homeless folks occupy. A Japanese husband and wife use a fourth for all their fishing poles and gear, and a recently divorced man with his four and five year old kids for the day takes up a fifth. The sixth is empty, as is the round concrete "bench" at the end of the jetty. My ritual is to walk around the concrete bench and head back along the way I came; only I stop for a moment at the end of the jetty and lean on the metal railing.

I can see a long way down to South Bay, with the air so clear. There's a couple of freighters parked in the wind rough waters, nothing major. During the dockworkers' slowdown and company lockout last year, there were dozens of freighters bound for Oakland anchored up and down the bay, all sunk heavy with cargo. At night they were lit up, like a necklace of high rises or office buildings strung along the bay, like an impromptu city fashioned by one of the rare instances of organized, open working class warfare in this country. The city of San Francisco, home of the militant pro-Communist ILWU and the historical location of a bloody General Strike in 1934 lead by the dockworkers, made conscious decisions in the 1960's and '70's that lost the city its deepwater port. What's left on the wharfs is either hopelessly anachronistic, or converted to Pier 39 type shopping malls for the tourists, in line with the increasingly yuppified character of the city. Current economic troubles may have temporarily halted the gentrification and post-industrialization of San Francisco, but that's the long-term trend, make no mistake.

Oakland, by contrast, made an intense effort to keep and expand its deepwater port facilities, even getting the rebuild of the East Bay side of the Bay Bridge located to the north of the current bridge, against the wishes of San Francisco's mayor Willie Brown in desiring to develop Treasure Island I might add. And, by contrast, Oakland remains mired in an urban poverty that is pervasive, even as it remains on the mainline of the older industrial economy. It's old news that Oakland was the murder capitol of the country last year. Arguably, the aborted effort by mayor Jerry Brown to make West Oakland the dot com hub for the east bay, with startups buying up entire blocks in the city's poorest, most violent neighborhoods, has left the area worse off than before now that the e-bubble has burst.

I turn and look at my new home, from the jetty two hundred yards or so out into China Basin. Clouds scud over PacBell Park's colossal racks of lights and tiers of seats. The residential high rises of South Beach obscure a view of downtown to the north of the ballpark. The public art three-storey orange surveyor's stand catches a flash of sun through the marina's thicket of masts. To the south of the stadium, the cove and marina are also dappled with scarce sunlight beneath shrieking seagulls. The Lefty O'Doul Bridge, built in 1933 as the Third Street Bridge, has the shape of a huge draft horse straining at its load. Rollercoaster ribbons of the 280 freeway ride the advancing clouds in the distance. It's much more urban than my old digs in Oakland, which is fine by me because I like cities. At the same, I can arrange to walk along the panoramic vista of an untamable San Francisco Bay.

I have lots of other walks around SOMA. One, to the ferry building is a bit longer, another to city hall a little shorter. I'm fifteen minutes away from Rainbow, a famous worker owned and run organic grocery store, and twenty-five minutes away from the Roxie Theatre indie movie house. The bay walk is still my favorite, hence my standard. The water is soothing, the views impressive, the overall walk meditative and refreshing. Why I walk anywhere bottom line is my heart. I inherited my dad's heart disease, so its watch the cholesterol and exercise. Walking's part of the exercise. On this walk, on the way back I notice that the guy with the crab pot tied it off at the head of the bridge, so that if the O'Doul were raised to let a boat pass, the pot, bait and whatever crabs would be pulled out high and dry. I've watched the bridge cantilever up, trapped rainwater pouring out as the roadway goes vertical. It's quite impressive. I notice the colorful pennants snapping on the wind above the China Basin Landing walkway, and that despite the cameras some daring joker has tagged one of the walkway's concrete pylons well above the water line.

I manage to cross Berry and King on Fourth without breaking anybody's windshield. A city cop has arrived and is directing traffic. Guess there were too many complaints of rock wielding pedestrians. I don't turn on Bluxome, but take the Brannan Street variation instead. There's a sweeping scene of downtown from Brannan and Fourth, with financial district skyscrapers spearing tumbling clouds, that continues for much of the rest of my walk. This part of South of Market is the heart of the city's commercial flower district and Brannan takes me past both Ssilkss, an artificial flower and plant emporium, and the Flower Market collection of trade flower and plant shops. It's also a neighborhood for destination restaurants, which are all hurting in this hard economy, canceling lunch or dinner or closing altogether. The Penske truck rental building at Fifth sits across the street from the SF Tennis Club and has shallower architectural insets that serve as benches and congregating points for the homeless. The sidewalk is crowded with the impoverished.

That's one thing that did surprise me moving to San Francisco, that being the overwhelming presence of the homeless. I've tried to reflect this accurately in describing one of my typical neighborhood walks. In SOMA it's particularly acute, with both a homeless and a men's shelter in the area, not to mention the central cop shop slash main jail. Oakland had as many, if not more homeless, but the city is much more suburban. Downtown is stone dead for anything, the homeless included, so they're scattered around Oakland's neighborhoods. I could depend on seeing the same grimy sunburned faces depending on whether I walked along Piedmont or Grand or Lakeside. I remember the guy who had the freeway off ramp near my Oakland Avenue apartment for his spot to beg. He slept in the bushes grown along the residential shoulder. In San Francisco, not only are the homeless ubiquitous, they're at concentrations that reflects the overall population density. Since there are fewer residents south of Market, the homeless are even more prominent.

Sad, but not at all scary. I've never felt unsafe taking my walks, which I've done at pretty much every hour without incident. Somebody like Larry Livermore would no doubt argue that, just because I've been lucky doesn't mean the streets of San Francisco aren't hotbeds of crime perpetrated by desperate, destitute homeless people. He once took the same tact about black people in Oakland, and black kids in particular, when he commented on my description of how I've walked around Oaktown for over ten years without serious incident. Utter bullshit. What I can report is that a recently passed city referendum sponsored by SF mayoral hopeful Gavin Newsom of "Care Not Cash" for the homeless hasn't done anything to thin out this invisible popula-

tion of literally thousands of poor individuals in the city newspaper columnist Herb Caen liked to call Baghdad by the Bay. An apt metaphor actually since the capitalist ruling class is quickly reducing this country, once characterized by a halfway organized working class and strong middle class, into a Third World banana republic.

I can see the newest addition to business in the neighborhood when I get to the corner of Brannan and Sixth, a Burger King on Bryant to compete with the McDonald's just two doors down. The Flower Market Café over my right shoulder, which thrived off the flower and plant mall it was a part of, had to recently discontinue dinners with the economy as it is, yet they can continue to open garbage fast food restaurants seemingly without end. These junk food establishments are the reason why there's no longer a cheap cafeteria in the Hall of Justice, and why local bars across the street are no longer able to make a go serving lunch to the crime and punishment crowd. The bar I favored for a decent lunch and a Buckler has cut back to bar food for dinner now, with a growing reliance on low-key live jazz to draw people in, done without the required cabaret license in the shadow of the Hall of Justice no less. I do wish them well.

I like to say I live a stone's throw away from the Hall of Justice. It's the hideous seven-storey gray concrete monolith with basements and helipad ahead as I walk up my street. I've seen support demos for people arrested at various protests on its long slippery steps —among them the anti-war breakaways on January 18 and February 16 and the gay shame confrontation with Gavin Newsom on February 6. Most recently, lines of blue uniformed SFPD rank-and-file expressed solidarity with their commanders, all indicted by the DA's grand jury, in a scandal that made national headlines. Those are the folks that I fear the most these days. I've seen how they behave at anti-war demonstrations. Things are only going to get worse with Junior Bush hell bent on war. I make sure the boys in blue are not up to any mischief before I open the front gate to gain entry to my home.

So long Fred Rogers.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... You can find the "lost" Hooligan column at the new, improved http://www.huahuacoyotl.com. To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligan3@mindspring.com.

"Hey, P.J.," I say to my pal, who is seated next to me on the couch while I'm playing Duke Nukem on the Play Station, "Ya wanna go out and get a beer or something?"

P.J. just looks at me with that look. That look where he tilts his head, and stares at me like I'm crazy.

"You know, a beer," I explain, "a Budweiser, or Grolsh."

I like Grolsh. Started drinking it in 11th Grade. It has those tops that you can reseal, so it stays good in your locker.

P.J. says nothing. I guess I'm getting the silent treatment.

"OK," I say, "we're going out."

And we do.

Once outside, we take a walk to the corner deli, and I get a Miller. It was either that, or Coors Silver Bullet. And that's pussy beer.

Outside again, P.J. and I take a walk to the local park, and sit on a bench there. I sip my Miller, and P.J. checks out the local action. Lots of women are walking around in their skirts and tennis shoes. It's just past five, and the evening rush has begun.

"What do ya think of her?" I ask P.J., pointing to a girl wearing a nice tan pants suit, with Nikes. She has long brownish hair, rosy cheeks, large green hoop earrings, and a nice butt.

P.J. says nothing, but looks at her. His head follows her as she walks past us. He just stares at her, then begins to pant.

"Put your tongue in your mouth," I say, "don't be so obvious."

But P.J. ignores me, and does the same thing when a blonde with a low-cut sweater walks by.

"The art to watching women," I explain to my pal as I sip my beer, "is to not be so damn conspicuous. Look like you are looking at something else. Maybe reading the paper or something. But if you just stare at them, they'll know!"

P.J. again just looks at me like I'm nuts. So I ignore him and concentrate on my Miller.

A few minutes later we spot a stunning brunette across the street. She's wearing a green overcoat, tight jeans, and eyes as blue as Windex. She's hot.

"Whoa," I say.

P.J. says nothing. He just starts panting again. Heavy.

Suddenly the brunette spots us and smiles. Then she crosses the street and starts to walk toward us. I feel my heart start to beat fast, and my hand starts to sweat even though I'm grasping a cold beer. P.J. starts with his tongue again.

"Hi guys," says the brunette, as she finishes crossing the street, and enters the small park where we are seated.

"Um, hi," I say, sheepishly.

"You are so cute!" she says, and then a big smile crosses her face.

"Thank you," I say, beginning to blush.

"Not you," she says, then points to P.J., "him!"

I look at P.J. It's like the hundredth time this has happened. Chicks spot us, then they go for P.J. Even though he pants with his tongue hanging out.

I take a good look at my pal, with his dark brown eyes, curly facial and body hair, and nubby tail. He's a Yorkshire Terrier. So what? He's fucking three pounds. And he gets more chicks in one day then I could get in a lifetime. This isn't punk rock. But let me back up a bit.

About five years ago I started whining a lot that I wanted a puppy. Really bad. Wendy got me a virtual pet, one of the Japanese things, and it died. But not before it turned into a chicken, a lizard, and Henry Rollins. A head with a thick neck.

"You can't take care of a virtual pet—how can you expect to take care of a real dog?" she asked me.

"It's different," I explained, "virtual pets are tougher than real animals. They're Japanese."

Wendy asked me what the fuck I was talking about and I admitted I didn't know. But that that excuse sounded good.

"Well," she said, "maybe one day you can have a real dog."

"When?" I asked her, "You always say that! I'm all grown up now, I think I deserve a dog!"

"We'll see," she said.

And for months I bugged her for one.

Then came my birthday. Well, a few days before it, anyway.

Nick, my stepdad, was over, and we were playing Dark Forces on The PlayStation. The door bell rang, and I went to answer it. It was most likely Wendy, and most likely she didn't have her keys, because key-loss runs in her family.

I opened the door and there stood Wendy, and our pal, Allyson, who is way punk rock.

I held the door open, and they both walked in. I then went back to the couch and continued to show Nick how to shoot Storm Troopers so they scream "arrgh!" and die.

Wendy and Allyson walked over to us, and Wendy tried to hand me a shoe box. Well, a sneaker box. Converse.

"Take this box, George," she said, nonchalantly, "it's something I found for you." Then she handed me the box. Or tried to.

I told her I was busy killing Darth Vader's troops on an alien moon, and that I'd take it later.

"Take it now! she exclaimed.

I looked at her and Allyson. Allyson had her hands on her hips, and looked pissed. So did Wendy.

"Put the box down, and I'll take it later," I said, as I shot a Storm Trooper right between the fucking eyes. He yelled, called me "Rebel Scum," then died.

Wendy then forced the box into my hands, making me drop the PlayStation controller.

"All right," I said, pissed.

I held the box and looked at Wendy. It contained Converses. And as much as I think they are cool sneakers, I can't wear them because my feet are flat. She'd be better off sending them to Norb.

Then the box moved.

In my hands.

Suddenly I felt my heart begin to race. The last time something moved like that was when I went to move a trash bag out-

side my old apartment when I was really drunk, after a Ramones show. The bag moved in my arms, then a huge rat jumped out, landed on my shoulder, squealed, and then hauled ass down the street.

So I was kinda hesitant to open the box.

"Aren't ya gonna open it?" asked Allyson, with her cute Brooklyn accent.

I looked at her, and Wendy, in shock. All I could think of, was that there was a live rat in this box, and when I opened it, it would bite off my nose. The biggest target in sight.

"Open it," said Nick.

I looked at all three of them. It was a conspiracy. They were all out to get me. I knew it. I just wasn't sure until now. They wanted me to get rabies so I could foam at the mouth like Cujo, then get locked up in Bellevue, where I'd meet a large Indian, who would eventually suffocate me, then free himself.

The box moved again.

My heart was now racing faster than Mario Andretti, or that little monkey racer, Diddy-Kong. I put the still unopened box down on the couch, and something popped its head out.

It had brown eyes, dark hair, and teeth. And it had a red ribbon around its neck. They'd given me a rodent.

"Well?" said Allyson, looking at me with her hands still on her hips.

I didn't know what to say, so I looked at the thing in the box again. It wasn't a rat. It was a dog. And it was wagging it's nubby tail.

"A puppy?" I said, in shock.

"Yup," said Wendy, smiling.

"A puppy?" I repeated, still in shock.

"That's what it is," said Allyson, "and boy was he hard to take care of at my house! Devil Dog. Hound from Hell!"

"A puppy for me?" I said, again.

"Yes it is, George," said Nick.

"A puppy?" I repeated again. I was obviously in shock.

It jumped out of its box and started to run around the couch. I just stared at it. I couldn't believe it. A puppy. In our house. I wanted to play Dark Forces again. Some kind of reality.

It continued to wag its nub, and run around the couch.

"Aren't ya gonna pick him up?" asked Wendy.

I was kind of afraid to. What if he bit off my nose?

"George," said Nick, "pick up the puppy!"

I bent over and picked it up. It licked my hands and then my face. I looked closely at it, and suddenly began to feel tears well up behind my eyes. Wendy had gotten me a puppy! A real dog! I was a grownup now! Punk Rock!

Over the next couple of days we played the name game with the puppy. Also the sleeping in the crate and crying all night game. And the pooping and peeing in the apartment game. The dog won every time.

First his name was Sneaker. Because he came in a Converse sneaker box. Hey, it was better than "Chuck Taylor." Then it was Lucky. From 101 Dalmatians. Or the drummer of The Circle Jerks. But that didn't stick either. He just didn't seem like a Lucky.

Then it was Pepper, Coco, Brownie, Killer, Moose, Mugger, Johnny, Joey, Dee Dee, Marky, Tim, Jello, Ben, Norb, Mykel, Stiv, Cheetah, Sid, Blag, Todd, Joe, Sean, and Mushy Tushie Poo-Poo Boy. That was Allyson's idea.

But finally we decided on Scooter. Because he couldn't walk right yet, and his little butt seemed to race faster than his front end.

We also decided on P.J. Which stands for Pussy Junior. Named after me, Pussy Senior.

And it's good we came up with a name, because it was time for his first vet visit. When I took him in, I felt like a proud dad. And Wendy, a mom. The vet looked him over, and as he held my son, I held my breath. I was worried. Turns out he's OK, but has a little bronchitis. Then the vet gave us a bill. Wow. It really is like having a kid.

The puppy and I soon became great friends, watching television, listening to punk albums, and eating together. We also took long walks and met lots of our neighbors. We were now part of the local dog club.

Then I had a couple of gigs with the band out of town. I wanted to cancel the shows and stay home with P.J., but knew everyone would be disappointed. So I went and played. The whole time I bitched to my band, and our salesgirl pal, Monica, that I missed P.J. They all called me a pussy, and told me to be more punk rock. At our show in Philly, Monica made a sign that said, "I Love P.J." and stuck it on the back of my leather jacket. All night people were asking me who P.J. was and I told them he was my puppy. It didn't even occur to me how they knew the name P.J. I was in puppy heaven.

"You are the cutest thing I've ever seen," said the brunette, to P.J.

P.J. just wagged his nubby tail, and licked her hands as she caressed his tiny head.

"You are so sweet," she cooed, and the dog ate it up, jumping up on his hind legs and doing that little puppy dance.

"What's his name?" she asked.

"Oh, now you talk to me," I said, snidely.

I was tired of being ignored for a puppy. Everyone looked at him and played with him. Me? I was just his servant. The guy who took him around. His chauffeur. His butler. His poop cleaner.

"So?" she asked.

"P.J., his name is P.J." I said.

"Well," she said to the dog, "you certainly are a cute puppy, P.J.! What's your dad's name?"

P.J. just licked and danced around. He hadn't mastered the English language yet.

"I'm George, punk rock!" I said to the girl fondling my puppy.

"I'm Andrea," said the girl with the glass-cleaner eyes.

She then told me it was great meeting me and P.J.

An hour later, after she'd told me her whole life story, she asked when she could see P.J. and me again.

If I'd known it was this easy to meet girls with a dog, I'd have never picked up a guitar.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. machoman@georgetabb.com
2. I thought it was me, but it's not. The world has gone crazy.
3. My dog rules, and so do Dean Dean And The Sex Machines.

Juan Nuevo

Fuckin' a, right? I was listening to I HATE MYSELF on the way home from work today and I was thinking about having to write my column. I was also thinking how I should get some exercise. I was thinking about work too, and how it fucking sucked. It's Thursday right now, so I was thinking about the weekend too. I don't have dick planned so I'll be home watching *Law & Order* for most of it. That and the Crime Friday marathon on USA Channel. No panic, though, sitting there. The dude from I HATE MYSELF was crooning about how there's no brighter side, and I was thinking, "Fuck yeah, man. There is no bright side, and man, my life *is* emptier than an empty 40oz." But I wasn't sitting there drenched in my own sweat, paralyzed with terror, scraping at any shreds of sanity and safety I could muster. I guess that was a bright side, but fuck that; I was feeling the dreaded depression. And why shouldn't I, right? Fuckin a.

So, I was talking to Arwen. Arwen Curry. My editor. Punk Rocker. Maximumrocknroller. This was like last month or so. I was freaking out about this column. I felt like a hack. I felt like some peddler of cheap rehashed mental illness anecdotes; like a crumby mentally ill Seinfeld. I called up Arwen. I was on a fucking deadline and I wasn't really so sure I had anything valid or relevant to say. Actually, at that point I wasn't so sure I was valid or relevant as a human being. She laid a pep talk on me. It at least affirmed that the higher ups still wanted me writing a column every month. But honestly, I did have some points. I mean, how much of my shtick can people take? I curse a lot. I start a lot of sentences with the word "anyway." I overanalyze shit. I can't make a fucking point without explaining that I'm making a point and introducing and concluding it. My endnotes are corny and self-indulgent. Ooooh, MANOWAR. I'm the only columnist who is constantly writing about the fact that he has a column. Fuck, now I'm writing about how I write about having the column I write. Fuck. I think this is why I'm on medication.

Anyway.

So yeah, this is basically when I hatched the scheme to write my column all diff'rent. I was going to kill the commentary and tell stories, like a normal fucking person. You know, like George Tabb. So I belted out my opus. It was a 4200-word chronicle of a night out on the town with my brother and his friends. It was fucking long and there wasn't any self-analyzing, commentary, or weird stupid shit. It was mostly a blow by blow of the shit that got done and said that night. Then I wrote another one.

Anyway, I talked to Arwen about the column. It turns out Long Island suburban male meatheadism is a sort of foreign concept to her. What sucks is that it used to me for me, too. There was a time when I wouldn't even imagine going to some assy jock nightclub to troll for "babes" or whatever. I was with my friends talking shit and drinking 40 oz's in carwash parking lots trying to ollie shopping carts listening to THE KIDZ. Fuckin a'.

But shit's different now. All of my friends from back then are either fucking C.PA.s or whatever, or they stayed punk and moved on to places like Philly, Portland, or San Francisco. My friends are gone, and I'm finding it harder and harder to relate to the younger crop of punkers from here. Besides the fact that I can make it to 98% of the DIY shows that go on here. Fuck. I am complaining now.

So, fucking back to the point. I was baiting Arwen to criticize the column for being fucked up. I flat out called a girl ugly, which I figured was going to be good for at least some criticism. After a couple of minutes Arwen diplomatically started presenting an argument as to why the stuff expressed in my story was pretty bunk. We talked about gender roles, objectification, and beauty standards. We talked about sexism and how it related to punk. We talked about boy-backlash to feminism. We covered some shit. It was fun. It was like the stuff me and my pals used to talk about in the carwash parking lot.

Arwen made a few fucking mint points. And I guess relaying them here was kind of the point of that rambling.

From what I could tell, the gist of what she was saying was this: there's a pretty big conflict between trying to live your life in a radical and forward-thinking way while clinging to bullshit ideas of some crumby beauty hierarchy. Beyond that, punk is a fucking place where people are allowed to be themselves, and not be judged on stupid shit like looks or other dumb stuff. Arwen punctuated that point with the fact that I write this column every month about my shit with mental illness. By mainstream standards I'd be judged as a fucking weirdo. If you extend that reasoning, basically I wind up being a dude who plays by punk's rules when it's convenient, but when it suits me I'll abandon punk values. Pretty fucked up, when you put it like that, huh?

Anyway, It was a really neat conversation. In the end I guess it's a pretty hard balance between bucking the status quo bullshit mainstream beauty standards and just plain thinking someone doesn't look good. Whatever, I guess.

Tattoos

I want some fucking tattoos. I feel like I could really rock a half sleeve or two. I'd look badass, you know? I've gone this long without getting any because of one thing: long johns. When I was 19 or so, there was one winter where I didn't have any pants. Eventually in January or February I acquired some, but before that I just had my army shorts. I used to walk around in army shorts with long johns underneath and a big pair of Doc Martens'. I looked like a fucking mess. It looked straight up dumb. But in 1996 or whatever, I thought that shit looked badass. I was all, "Fuckin a'!" Any time I get close to getting a tattoo, all I can think about are those long johns. I want a fucking tattoo, but come on. What if I wind up with the tattoo version of long johns, army shorts, and Doc Martens?

Romance Update

It's Sunday now. I kissed a girl right on the lips last night. It was crazy. After we kissed she looked around and said, "So that was our first kiss, huh?" Mint.

***

The Punk Rocker Mental Illness Pen Pal Network is up and running. If you are looking to connect with someone to write back and forth with about Mental Illness, send over your info, and I'll hook you up with a pen pal. The contact information is below.

***

Past "Oh Man What The Fuck!?!??!" columns are no longer available on the web. Look for *My Name Is Lubrano* later this summer. It's the anthology zine of all the columns.

Fuckin'a, right?: Wells Tipley, PO Box 772, East Setauket, NY 11733 USA. Or email me at wells@trafficviolation.com.

***

END NOTES:

1. Ed. He's a bowling alley lawyer. Fuckin' a. Ed.
2. I think "Jerry Orbach has a Posse" would be a good spoof on the Andre The Giant has a Posse thing. I know that those spoofs are like so seven years ago, but I've been thinking about it a lot.
3. I once heard a story that one time in New York City after a show somebody congratulated the guy from I HATE MYSELF on a good set. The dude looked back with a straight face and said something like, "No it wasn't. We suck. I don't even know why we came all the way up here and why people want to see us play." Then he walked away mumbling to himself. I wonder if that really happened.
4. Seinfeld.

Blood and Crocuses

As I write this, all is dark and cold outside as winter reaches its fitful, blustery end. Snow sits frozen, fouded thoughts.

Everything is heading for war, death, destruction, suicide, while millions of people on the streets of the world have called for peace, trying to hold back an army. The US generals are anxious, looking to attack by mid-March, and Bush has announced his plans for a postwar Iraq occupied by US troops and a puppet regime. Everything is on edge, waiting for the siren call to war.

Soon, the mighty crocus flower will be in bloom. Every year I welcome its brave face that shows before any other flower, a shock of beauty and color in a frozen earth, a symbol of hope that the world will warm.

Small brave flowers and loaded guns.

Now is a time of in-between, a time of change, a time of coming together and falling apart. The drums of war are sounding, but the tide of resistance is gaining force.

Only a few weeks ago, an estimated 30 million people took to the streets around the world to protest against US plans for war. I'm sure *MRR* will include news stories about February 15, and we've all heard about the day, but I can't help but give a few well-deserved highlights here. The global solidarity was nothing short of fucking amazing.

A *million* people, twenty times the size of my hometown, marched in Rome.

700,000 people marched in London and told Prime Minister Tony Blair to "Make Tea Not War." Ken Livingstone, the Mayor of London, called Bush "a stooge for oil interests" and said he was presiding over "the most corrupt and racist American administration in over 80 years."

Half a million people marched in Berlin, and over 100,000 gathered in Paris.

Half a million people marched in NYC despite the cops, and I was cheered by the New York IndyMedia F15 website that was updated many times throughout the day:

"**F15 1:21 pm:** Third Avenue is full from 50th to 53rd Streets. Cars and buses have been trapped by the crowd—there are US Postal Service vans, a service van, and taxis. Marchers have completely taken the street…

F15 3:37 pm: Critical mass shut down Times Square for about 5 minutes. About 20 to 30 bikes and 100 people surrounded Times Square, but we are hearing that the police have begun to move people out of the way…"

In Moscow, a thousand people gathered at the American Embassy. Ludmilla Likhikh, a factory worker, accused the United States of hypocrisy, saying it should focus on disarming itself. "America is looking for arms in Iraq while it has so many of its own," she said. "America is the number one terrorist nation."

People protested in cities all over the United States, and gathered in Hong Kong, Jordan, Syria, Cairo, Cape Town, Copenhagen, Budapest, Warsaw, Reykjavik, and Bombay, even at the McMurdo Research Station in Antarctica, and in hundreds of other cities and towns around the globe.

The global united message was clear—Yankee Go Home!

President George Bush, an arrogant elitist bastard (just like his dad), likened acknowledging the global protest to, "making foreign policy based on a focus group." And this, from a man who rigged an election! Any day now, Bush could give the order for attack, as he has not backed down in his zeal for "regime change" in Baghdad. By the time you read this, the war may have already escalated.

But here I am, a punk with war and resistance on my mind.

I've been to shows almost every weekend this month, saw some great bands, and had some kick ass punk rock times, but that will have to wait for another story.

As I try to write this column, I am caught in this moment of hawks and doves, as the US troops wait for the full March moon of dessert nights, and death hangs in the air, sharp and bitter cold.

This time makes me think, if I'm not resisting this war that's about to happen—why do I bother trying to be conscious at all? If punk is not speaking out against this war—what is punk good for? As I've said before, war isn't politics. War is dying in a ditch.

"Do you really want to kill me? Tell me why." The Specials

Remember how Bush first attempted to tie Saddam to Al-Qaeda and the war on terrorism? With flimsy evidence, only Tony Blair took him seriously.

Then, the Bush Administration focused on Saddam's weapons of mass destruction, and declared we must strike first "to make America safe." Bush ignored the fact that the United States has the largest stockpile of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons in the world, and the bulk of Iraq's fifth-rate military has already been bombed to hell.

More smoke and mirrors in an attempt to rally the masses to war, and throughout it all, the state screams "high alert" and terrorizes its own citizens.

Recently, Bush tried again to sell the war and made a speech explaining how the US invasion would bring "freedom" to Iraq. Ah, how the words spin and twist in agony.

In Bush's idea of freedom, Iraq would be occupied by US troops and ruled by an un-elected US authority until an Iraqi "democracy" could be set up, sometime in the future.

An interesting side note: Saudi Arabia, our closest ally in the Middle East next to Israel, is not a democracy. It's a religious monarchy. King Fahd, the most recent heir to the thrown, has ruled Saudi Arabia according to Islamic law since 1982. There is a modern system of courts of justice, but the highest law is the King's word. Individuals can appeal their cases, but a decision signed by the King is final.

Yet, there isn't any talk of using a nuclear bomb on the Crown Prince's palace in the name of "liberty."

This war is not about terrorism. This war is not about weapons of mass destruction. This war isn't even really about Saddam, personally.

This war is the continuation of Kissinger's dream. The reason we sent US troops into Vietnam, Korea and Cambodia in the 70s. The same reason our black ops, money, and guns went into Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua in the 80s. The same reason George Bush Sr. invaded Panama in 1989 and started the Gulf War in 1991. This war is part of the same system that currently trains paramilitary troops for Columbia, Argentina, and southern Mexico.

This war is about the US need to stay on top. As Noam Chomsky wrote in *What Uncle Sam Really Wants*, "If you want a global system that's subordinated to the needs of US investors, you can't let pieces of it wander off."

Right now, the US is defending its "national interests," is fighting to win the oil because oil is power in this global capitalist game. Russian and French oil companies had contracts pending with Saddam, and it looks like those deals may suddenly be off.

Mommy, can I eat a gun?

Once again, the poor of America are paying for war.

Here in the United States, regular folks are already suffering because of our government's insistence on war. And things are getting worse.

President George Bush, just like his namesake, has chosen guns instead of butter.

In a very short time, Bush has increased the defense budget to its highest spending in twenty years, while at the same time cutting social service programs that millions of Americans depend on.

This winter the Bush administration asked Congress to increase the Pentagon's annual budget to $451,400 million in 2007, a figure that would make even Reagan blush. Of this, $27,200 million goes to wage the "war on terrorism" and $8,000 million pays for the ongoing war in Afghanistan.

The biggest kicker of all—these figures don't even include invading Iraq. The latest estimate is $100 billion. Let me repeat the analysts' projected cost of the war, again, slowly: One hundred, paid-for-by-you-and-me, billion (one thousand million, written as 1 followed by nine zeros) fucking American dollars. Enough to buy everyone on the planet each a pitcher of beer and a shot of whiskey. Wouldn't that better serve America's image abroad?

At the same time, *thirty-seven percent* of America's children—38 million kids—are growing up in poverty.

"Leave no child behind," said Bush during the election. Liar! Thief! Murderer!

The rich, who have the most to gain if we have absolute control of Iraq's oil, are meanwhile making out like bandits as about 37 percent of the new tax cuts go to the wealthiest one percent of taxpayers. Fuckers! Burn the rich that prey on the poor!

Here in Massachusetts, Republican governors have followed Bush's lead. Human services have been slashed, while tax cuts benefit the rich at the expense of the poor and working class. (Don't voters notice these things, behind the politicians' nice hair and wide smiles?) Most recently, the Massachusetts Health and Human Services budget was cut by $34 million, nickel and dimes compared to the Defense budget, but crucial money that was used to help tens of thousands of people.

Poor women, an easy scapegoat for spineless politicians, will be especially hurt by the budget cuts. For example, family planning services were totally eliminated. Done away with. Last year, 60,000 women without health insurance in Massachusetts received reproductive education, screening, and prevention. Where will they go now? Planned Parenthood has only one office in Boston, and the waiting line is already long.

And, this is all happening in the context of welfare "reform" that instituted draconian welfare-to-work standards, and a state minimum wage well below any sort of living wage.

Fuck! Fuck this capitalist war on the poor!

In a ridiculous related example, the US spent $20 million dollars last year training dolphins to go to war. Dolphins were sent to the Gulf by the US Marines to search for enemy divers in 1991, and a recent news story says they're getting ready to ship out again. Seriously.

As more working families, women, children and men are falling into ever deepening poverty, not getting enough to eat, and becoming homeless, I don't see any help in sight. Priority has been placed on genocide.

The wind screams, and threatens to tear down my door. The temperature drops to 7 degrees, and I wait for the Earth to slowly change its axis towards the Sun.

Daily, I hear of more acts of resistance against the upcoming war.

And the days become longer.

Even the gentle poets are taking a stand.

Andrew Motion, British poet laureate, recently published *Causa Belli*:

"They read good books, and quote, but never learn
a language other than the scream of rocket-burn.
Our straighter talk is drowned but ironclad:
elections, money, empire, oil and Dad."

Hell ya!

This month the people of Italy inspired me as they stopped trains carrying US tanks to the Gulf. Over 600 people converged at the train station in Pisa, Italy, which serves the nearby US military base Camp Derby and trains have been delayed or stopped altogether. In the city of Torino, the British embassy was occupied. Espresso wins over tea any day.

Close to home in Medford, Massachusetts, two hundred protesters made national news when they marched from Davis Square to the Gantcher Center at Tufts University where Bush Sr. was scheduled to speak on "Perspectives on the Middle East" (the same day his son announced the US would bring "liberty" to Iraq). According to Boston's IndyMedia, riot and motorcycle police surrounded the protesters, and arrested ten people who attempted to break through the police line. Inside the auditorium, a woman disrupted old Georgie's speech by yelling "Liar!" before she was removed. Bush Sr. continued his speech and smirked, "We've now found another real good reason to use duct

tape."

Hilarious, fuck-face. This undemocratic jerk really has the one-liners, doesn't he?

In Washington, DC, over 300 junior and high school students either walked out of their classes or skipped school on February 21 in order to rally at Dupont Circle against the war. And who says the youth is apathetic?

All across the US, fifty-seven cities and counties, both large and small, have passed resolutions against the war. And who says most of America supports the war?

The protest has also gone virtual and on-line and "contact your representative" has taken on new meaning. Hundreds of thousands of people called and faxed their senators and the White House in a "virtual march on Washington" on February 26, jamming many congressional telephone lines for several hours. The White House switchboard was also flooded and most callers heard a message that "all circuits are busy."

Death in Spring

Despite the myriad voices for peace, this war is coming like a hard rain. I can feel the storm gathering, see black clouds gaining speed. Bush, our illegitimate President, is bent on destruction and the time to stop him is growing short.

Where I leave you is with the future. This peace movement is building, and when the body bags begin to arrive, and the carpet bombs begin to fall, we will all have no choice but to do whatever we can, individually and collectively, to stop this war.

Bush told the country and the world, "You are either with us or against us." I for one, joined by millions, am against.

In this time of blood, I remember the truth. People are more powerful than governments. Corrupt power falls, torn down by the angry mob.

Cheers to all resistance and up the fucking punks.

Erika

Ransom Notes Continued

1. Punk keeps me somewhat sane, so notes on a few good shows.

Lowell punks rock! The Sugar Shack on Feb. 21 was off the hook, punks literally bouncing off the walls, an entire small coffee shop engulfed in crazy punks jumping around smashing into each other and everything not bolted down. Check out THE KNOX's demo when it comes out, as they play hard with broken guitars held together with duct tape and nails.

CAUSTIC CHRIST came to Boston with fellow Pittsburgh punks CORPUS CHRISTI and played an all-ages show in the city during a snowstorm. Both bands rocked the house, and CAUSTIC delivered a blazing punk hardcore attack. During CORPUS CHRISTI's set I danced in the circle pit till I couldn't breathe. Boston's CUT THE SHIT also played, and reminded me of a more modern sounding MINOR THREAT, good honest hardcore that made ya want to smash things.

Cape Cod punks rule! The Juice Bar was the most positive show I've been to in months. Hell of a fun time. Getting my lip bashed in and bruised was just a souvenir.

2. Back columns, email, all that fun stuff, can be found at www.theprofits.org. Ha!

This piece was written by Noel, Tim and Darby, with invaluable help from Heather, Ruth, and all who have been involved with the ABC projects. Contact: darby@mutualaid.org.

The Anti-authoritarian Baby-sitters Club (ABC) started in late fall of 2001 because childcare was being sorely neglected in every DC organization that we were involved with or knew of. Several of us who had experience with youth work were frustrated with this problem and wanted to help develop a group and a long-term process for changing the situation. A central point for us was to make sure we were helping others to incorporate this work as a priority in their organizing, as well as being aware that many childcare providers emulate negative patterns we see in society, which we didn't want to repeat.

Our intention is to recognize working with youth as a revolutionary project and affirm the capabilities and potential of young folks. First in our approach is the idea of treating young folks as equals and peers, while sharing knowledge with them and respecting their opinions and ideas as valid. We make a genuine effort not to interfere with their creativity or desires, while not putting them or others in danger. Through personal interactions and activities, we try to engage rather than entertain, support rather than dictate, and communicate with youth rather than talk down to them.

We're striving to improve how we facilitate kids' processes of understanding feelings, as well as managing and communicating about them.

Helping youth develop critical thinking skills regarding their actions and the world around them is also a key goal. A central component of this effort is anti-capitalism, because we believe all parents deserve community support in raising their children, and that money should not be an obstacle to getting quality childcare. It also seems to us that capitalism commodifies all people, including children, treating them as potential wage-earners and producers, not as amazing and complex individuals.

We're excited to learn from other youth workers, parents, and certainly from young folks themselves. The process that we've constructed so far involves first setting up a schedule for the day with shifts, then filling the shifts. We have to make sure the space is good for what we need it for, and assess our supplies situation: is there anything we need to get before the event? We try to get a sense before the event of how many young people are coming, and of what ages they are. It's important to be prepared for accidents, and to have someone (or two) who is coordinating the day and knows kind of everything that is going on, including has connections with the event organizers. Getting supplies to the space can be a challenge since many of us don't have cars, and we try to make sure to have some snacks available, and maybe lunch, depending on the situation.

Of course there's also clean up and preparing for the next day. The caregivers are folks that are either involved with ABC or were recruited by ABC from our community or from the organization putting on the event we are doing. We make sure that every shift at any event has at least one person who is either directly involved in the group or has worked with us before. We put together trainings on first aid and are working to put together a booklet for folks, with information on how we set up ABC, ideas for cooperative games and activities, first aid, advice on how to interact with kids in non-oppressive ways, and that sort of thing. As far as parents being concerned about qualifications, training, and trust, no one has voiced concern to us, and we believe that all of our caregivers are qualified. Additionally, we invite parents to spend any length of time in the space, which may help them to feel comfortable.

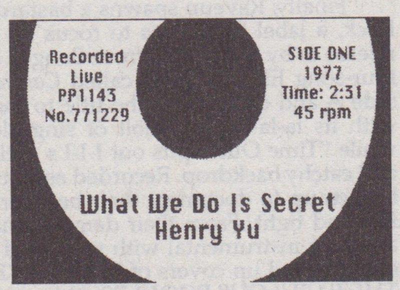
So far, two to three caregivers have been adequate to cover the numbers of kids that show up at events. Our approach has been to plan to have two people around for every shift that we do and ask a couple people to stop by the space periodically throughout the event to make sure the folks there are not in need of help. We have put together a form, based on one we acquired from a daycare, that has basic information about each youth and then asks specific questions about special needs. We have everyone fill out these forms and talk to us so we know of any allergies, medications, medical conditions, etc. We have also taken polaroid pictures of the kids with their parents when we have a lot of folks in one place.

Each person has a different approach to dealing with child/child conflict and much of the approach depends on the age of the youths involved in the conflict. The most important thing is listening to the kids and ask them questions about how they perceive their behavior and how they think it affects the other youth and potentially the group as a whole. Young people often seem to get the connection between their behavior and the world around them.

The ABC came together in early 2002, and the first event we decided to tackle was the gathering of April 20. The folks who organized the childcare got an amazing daycare space donated for the weekend. Loaded with toys, a refrigerator, and a big backyard, it was perfect. Since then we've covered the second annual Visions in Feminism conference, the September 29-30 protests, the Peace & Justice Studies Association Conference, and the National Conference on Organized Resistance in 2003. Up to now we have largely been a "service provider," meaning that we've stepped in during different events to help offer childcare, and haven't done much to educate groups about what they need

to be doing to make childcare a priority and a possibility. Lately, though, this has been on our minds a lot, especially as we get more and more requests to do childcare at different events. We've started the process by reflecting on what we do to set up childcare, and we're trying to translate this information into print and hope to make a brochure out of it, which maybe would accompany a workshop we could put together for groups. Currently we are helping the Southern Girls Convention to develop childcare and hope to do a similar project with Visions in Feminism, a conference which we provided childcare for last year. We'd like to see the day when groups take care of organizing their own childcare, and we can put our efforts into supporting that, but also into initiating our own projects, such as a weekly free childcare session for anyone who needs it.

Kicked Out Of The eBay Lows



Bummerb*tch came to pick me up at LAX. His roulette hairdo had dealt him a straight flush that mornin, whom he had tied up in the backseat. Unfortunately Bum forgot the gag, because Birdy was on some sort of speed and could not stop talking, his latest rant being his pet peeves. It was barely noon and Bum was hungry as usual. While his stomach grackled loudly, Birdy spouted his ever growing litany of peeves. No fish. No seafood. No crazy driving. No freeways. No spiders. The peeves grew as quickly as Bum's trade pile. Bum was hungry but Birdy didn't want to eat. He wanted to play the game of Sorry he had just gotten.

Bummer whipped out his Zagat's guide and pored over it with the obsessiveness of a new Mike Bastarache Set Sale list. We ended up at what turned out to be a Hot Dog on a Stick, which Bum had touted as "sampling the local Santa Monica cuisine." The so-called Valet parking consisted of a Mexican family screaming at a cop who had just ticketed their bitchen Camaro. We ate numerous battered foods while sitting on a birdshit-caked cement block. Later, in yellow trash tradition, we played air hockey at the arcade. Bum's ogling over the swaying boobs of the girl playing next to us distracted him to score on himself several times. Fortunately, his oversized parka hid the action from the cops.

Uggly called. He said he'd come by. He appeared just as Bum and I decided to burn off some of our excess testosterone by doing some bench press. Uggly nervously eyed the 45 lb bar and passed. He was always the last kid picked in gym class and had no intention of getting buffed up. After a few sets, we headed back upstairs to talk about record collecting. Mad Max showed up shortly thereafter with the beer, followed by Garage Metal Guru, Jtf27, Sheslostcontrol and then Mmmbender. Jtf27, like me, had flown into LA specifically for the event, the ROCKET FROM THE TOMBS show.

ROCKET FROM THE TOMBS were the penultimate proto-punk band infamous for having spawned the DEAD BOYS and PERE UBU in the mid 70s. Arguably, they transcended both with their powerful combination of art attack and lo-fi aggressive songs. Having broken up 27 years ago or so, this combo was scheduled to play a reunion gig as part of David Thomas' DisastroDome event, an art-cum-music UBU sponsored thing that was to occupy the whole weekend. The final event would be an RFTT and PERE UBU show at a seated auditorium on the UCLA campus.

After a carbo loading pizza session, the evening culminated at the Roller Rink. Sheslostcontrol brought her own skates, but Bum had left his terry cloth shorts and halter at his boyfriend's house. Mad Max was rusty from his Rollerball days and could only muster weak moaning sounds as throngs of prepubescent girls ran over his skinny legs. Uggly warmed the bench as usual. Afterwards, the record nerds traded eBay war stories over glasses of water. It turned out that everyone had anonymously bought records from everybody else, and some even unknowingly had eBay bidding wars via their bid sniping programs while they hung out. It brought tears to our eyes. The night ended when Bum's self-imposed weekend midnight curfew kicked in.

The next morning, Birdy came by for a marathon game of Sorry. His Adam Rich power pop do glistened in the mid morning sun as he kicked our behinds till the sun shone out of them. Bum and I took naps and went to Silverlake to check out a matinee show featuring CHEAP CHICK, an all-girl CHEAP TRICK cover band. Mad Max met up with us. The Chicks were awesome. Their Robin Zander wore the same outfit as on *Live In Budokan* and pretended to smoke a cigarette between songs. Their Tom Petersson wore the same blue silk shirt and had the same dark tresses as her real equivalent, but ruined the effect by continually waving and winking at her kid during the show. Rick Nielson. While disappointed that their Bun E lacked the requisite wire frame glasses and cigarette dangling from her lower lip, they did rock hard and good. The afternoon ended with some long-assed napping on the parts of the geriatric collector crowd.

ROCKET FROM THE TOMBS. We sat in the second row, behind Smog Veil honcho Frank. Other luminaries such as Greil Marcus, Johnny Dromette, and Yo La Tengo's Ira Kaplan and Georgia Hubley were spotted. Fuck, the band looked like a bunch of grandpas and uncles, but they were dressed in black. The hair factor was minimized from their heyday, but that didn't keep us from swinging ours. The chops were there. The sound was incredible. David Thomas on vocals, Cheetah Chrome on slash'n burn guitar, Craig Bell keeping it all down on bass, and special guest Richard Lloyd from Television fueling the air with amphetamine-driven guitar licks, dueling with Cheetah Chrome to form a two-eels-fucking-in-a-bucket-of-snot twin guitar attack. Whoa. There was electricity in the air. David Thomas was smiling at Craig as they harmonized/screamed to "Final Solution", which was done in two parts, one midway during their 45 minute set, and in reprise form later. Its apocalyptic power was felt by the mesmerized audience. "Ain't It Fun", the grim Laughner blues rock epic later faithfully covered by GUN-S'N ROSES on their *Spaghetti Incident* covers album, was sung by Cheetah Chrome (who, by the way is now referred to back by his original née, Gene O'Connor). Gene also did "Sonic Reducer" the popular DEAD BOYS signature in its original RFTT rendition. Craig Bell led the band into a rousing rendition of his solo songwriting contribution, "Muckraker", which was later redone by his band the SAUCERS (whose back catalogue was reissued recently as a CD on the GTA label). Of course "30 Seconds over Tokyo" brought the house down. Thomas was in fine form, alternately standing and sitting to catch his breath, vocally attacking the songs with histrionic angst.

Bum's bedtime took us outta there during the UBU set ("Hey, where ya goin'…?" muttered Thomas), but we knew we had gotten our rock and roll for the night already, perhaps for the year, and who knows, maybe even our lifetime. Sheesh, we were *there*, dammit! 27 years after the real fact, but we were *there*!

Postscript—went to Other Music while visiting my girlfriend in NYC and bought the reissues of CLE compatriots the STYRENES' *It's Still Artastic* and the MIRRORS' *Hands In My Pocket*. Can't get enough! We will cover these next month in a loving PFUDD/Black To Comm sort of rant.

Hooked On Junk

Just got in a bitchen new Killed By Death type comp entitled *Hooked On Junk, Vol.1* (subtitled "Eighteen Forgotten Punk Losers from the USA 1978-1983"). Grapevine sez this one's been on hold for the past year due to the excessive masturbatory practices of its compiler, known mysteriously as El Dopa. Nice crude artwork, tho I coulda done without the naked El Dopa pics. The liner notes might have been written by one of the Iousse cousins, as informative and funny as those near beer 32-year-olds can possibly write. This one was a test pressing advance copy, so the real cover will probably not be printed on human skin.

OK, here we go. It starts off in real fine fashion with a good known track from SCREAM (their antisocial rant "Gov't Primer"), before launching into a generous helping of previously-unknown-to-me-punk-tuneage by the likes of the JOE HEBERT BAND via their nerd anthem "I Don't Want To Be a Preppy", the INFECTIONS (who at times channel Australia's FUN THINGS), RF7 with a track off their very rare debut *Acts of Defiance* EP and, from a super-rare acetate only, the misogynistic ravings by LA teens BODY COUNT.

But it's the DUCKY BOYS, hailing from Brooklyn before it became an art school campus and home to pretty boy rockers, who capture my imagination. The picture sleeve alone boggles the mind. Amateurism speckled with a pseudo menacing punk stance. Despite their name, there was one woman in the band, a

chubby hispanic-looking chick with a furrowed brow and a bowie knife. Ranks a distant second to the CHRONIC SICK LP cover for a hilarious manufactured punk look, but that's hella good company. Military fatigues and a jungle background give it a crazed Viet Vet vibe. Musically, these effs contribute the title track. "Hooked on Junk" is crazed thuggery that bridges the gap between insanity and mere obsesso-neurotic-fuckfest-anarchy. Hook me up with an actual copy and I'll do ya right (or just do ya).

Continuing, there's Dolls worship from Georgia's KRIS METHE AND THE MISTAKES and Maryland's THE KATATONIX, high school punk from the COMMANDOS (who, by the way are playing a 20+ year reunion gig this May back in their hometown of Worcester, Mass.), HELEN KELLER (a new rarity chronicled on the www.breakmyface.com website), LEGAL WEAPON, SUSPECT DEVICE (obscure CLE punk with a young pre-GBV Doug Gillard), the RECIPIENTS (TX lunacy), POODLE BOYS, DEPROGRAMMER, and the MANIKENZ. Sure, there's a requisite couple of lame-o tracks (I would've left off MALCOLM TENT and a pre-Minutemen George Hurley's HEY TAXI), but they in no way detract from what is an otherwise very rewarding listening experience. Come on and come all, but most of all, come in my mouth!

Long Walk Off A Short Pier

The Raveup machine continues its mission of putting out lost punk nuggets from America, grinding out another handful of gems, and as this goes to print yet another batch beyond these have already been released. Nearing 40 LP releases in only a couple of years, Pier has undisputedly established himself as the mogul of punk reissues.

THE VIOLATORS from Denver Colorado is given its due with its *Gun Control* LP. Never having released anything during its late 70s heyday, this DEAD BOYS-sounding band, lead by the red leather clad Tom Pop, finally unleashes its primitive sounds in the form of studio and live tracks. For context, check out their contemporaries THE DEFEX, whose *Beyond Machine Gun Love* LP was also posthumously and lovingly released on Raveup. Super hard and aggressive vocals over relentless riffing steeped in trad hard STOOGES style punk. And not surprisingly, covers of the DEAD BOYS "Ain't Nothing To Do" and IGGY AND THE STOOGES' "I Got A Right" can be found in their live set. An enjoyable and worthy release.

Fast Music is how the PRODUCTS described their music to the uninitiated (and unsuspecting). Now over 20 years later, their never before released long player sees the light of day as a followup to their 4 song 7" released in early '81. These pretty boys cop a pre/post Rick Springfield look replete with the coiff, and musically they back it up. Side A is inexplicably light watered down new wavish-pop-but-not-quite-power-pop faux brit sung minor chord stylings. Side B's is more promising, with a light punk sound on "On Your Own," and a dark rocker "Punch The Man." However, they never quite manage to ignite, and we'll save our sycophantasies for other releases.

Beg borrow or steal…Fuck…the lead track from the TRANSPLANTS' *Vegetable Stew* sticks a battle of the bands fantasy in my head in which this Boston band squares off their "Suicidal Tendencies" song against that of Bloomington Indiana's JETSONS. But hell, it ends in a tie 'cos both are amazing punk songs! Where the eff did this band come from, 'cos every track (originally home-recorded on a 4-track as well as live at The Space in Boston in 1979) rocks harder than the next! This is the best uncovered gem Raveup has found so far, great hard vocals ranted over a punk chug that's steeped in proto. These guys got into punk really early, 1976-ish, and those early influences are apparent in these songs. Guitar solos might be spotted, but these songs are short and to the point. They start where the AFRIKA KORPS left off and rock harder. On the live tracks they retro back to their garage roots with convincing covers by THE HAUNTED and the STARFIRES. As if the great music wasn't enough, the artwork on this is awesome, with a great theatrical cover shot of the guitarist standing on the mock dead body of over-their-top vocalist, who can be seen on the back cover looking like a shaggy Dead head burnout! These guys were real punks all the way and DEMAND YOUR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION. Truly a buy or die situation, so unless you have suicidal tendencies, you know what to do…

The Hawaiian shirted FOREIGN OBJECTS ain't from the Aloha state. These New England DICTATOR worshippers adored wrestling, television, and the general lowlife preoccupations of the nerdboy agoraphobics. Despite a plethora of facial and chest hair and guitar leads, these guys rock medium hard with sing along sardonic punk wit ("Recycled Jizz"). "Sgt Sanders" presages the obnoxio rap of the BEASTIE BOYS. Low sonic snot factor and hilarity make it a good wake-me-up record. Laff till the milk runs outta yr nose!

Raveup's pop imprint Backstreet makes another impression with the MANIKINS, an OZ band from Perth. Leaving a couple of 7" EPs and a one shot cassette tape as a legacy, this LP takes the best of the cassette tape. Pop fans will probably remember this band from their wonderful pop gem "I never thought I'd Find Someone Who Could Be So Kind," off their first 45. Hooks all over the place laid over tight playing make this a power pop meisterpeice, kin to early SCIENTISTS, their better known countrymates, but with more craftsmanship. 13 songs of skinny tie energy bridled in two and half minute frameworks. Great record.

Finally, Raveup spawns a bastard cousin called Shell Shock Rock, a label that plans to focus on Northern Ireland. Its first release is by some kids from Bangor called THE DOUBT. Their four-song EP from 1981 called *Contrast Disorder* is reissued on Side A and contributes the title to the LP. "Contrast Disorder", with its la-la-la's, is a jolt of sing along adenoidal pop punk, while "Time Out" spits out I-I-I's and oh-oh-oh's amidst its fast and catchy backdrop. Recorded essentially after they had already broken up to document their best songs, these guys could play fast and tight. From their demo session come "Fuck Nose", an amazing instrumental with way loud rockin' guitar, and totally cool punked up covers of BOWIE's "Hang On To Yourself" and THE FABULOUS POODLES' "Mirror Star." A great start for this new sub-label and well recommended.

Send Me Shit

As you can tell, I review all drivel. Send them in a hermetically sealed package to: Henry, 4309 23rd St, San Francisco, CA, 94114. Email to terasearch@yahoo.com.

Papercuts and Ink Smudges

Let's talk about fanzines for a minute. What happened to all the good straight edge hardcore ones? I know that the internet has had a negative impact on the printed zine, but there are still a ton of kids like myself who enjoy the tangible page versus the monitor and scroll button (especially since many hardcore websites don't last more than a few years). So until I can figure out a way to wheel my monitor into my bathroom, I thought it would be appropriate to mention a few solid hardcore zines that are worthy of your attention. I have owned at least one issue of the following zines listed, though I might not own their latest release:

Cut the Tension

A kid named Donny Mutt does this zine, and he also is in a pretty rad band called ONE UP. Issue number #4 fucking ruled, so I doubt #5, featuring interviews with DESPERATE MEASURES, PUNISHMENT, COALITION, NO RIGHTS, and TERROR, will let you down. If you live in the US and want to get a copy, send $1 to Donny Mutt, 147 East Baltimore Pike, Clifton Hgts, PA 19018. Add $1 and get a Cut The Tension poster (11x17" black and white glossy).

Start Today

I know the name is pretty generic, but this fanzine out of Pennsylvania isn't half-bad. Issue #3 is 64 pages and features FAR FROM BREAKING, ONE UP, NEVER SURRENDER, CHAMPION, COUNT ME OUT, FACE THE ENEMY, and a lot more pictures than the last issue. They're $2 in the USA ($3 Can/Mex, $5 rest of the world).

Impact

Issue #2 is a whopping 124-page book with stories, columns, book/record/fanzine reviews, as well as interviews with THE FIRST STEP, RUNNING LIKE THIEVES, FAR FROM BREAKING, FACE THE ENEMY, and DAMAGE CONTROL. If that wasn't enough, it has a 75-page section dedicated to the closing of the infamous club the Anthrax. The first issue mainly covered bands that were part of the rebirth of fast straight edge hardcore that happened in the mid to late 90s, and is also definitely worth checking out. I have yet to receive my copy of #2 in the mail, but

if this one is anything like the first issue, you won't be disappointed.

Town of Hardcore

Issue #3 didn't get the best review in *MRR* last month. I think that page on Gibby definitely had a lot to do with it. While I agree that Gibby represents a pretty materialistic and superficial side of hardcore (makeout club and high fashion), I still understand where Chloe was coming from in her review. That piece did come off as pretty homophobic. Still, I liked the previous issues of *TOH*, and issue #4 looks like it won't disappoint with interviews with PUNCH IN THE FACE, MENTAL, RAW DEAL, and BROTHERHOOD. This is probably the biggest issue yet. Send $2 ppd to 1458 Reynolds Ave., Burlington, Ontario L7M 3B7 CANADA.

I am sure there are other zines worth mentioning, but these were the only ones that I picked up with my own cash. Lord knows that you aren't sending them into *this* magazine. If you do a hardcore zine (sXe or not), then send it in!

Another Month of Mosh

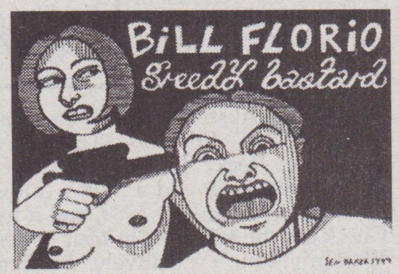
Check out the interview I did with STRIKING DISTANCE in this issue. Thanks in advance to Morgan McStotts and Walter Yetman for sending in photos.

I know I didn't give the best review to DIEHARD YOUTH's new full length, but am I the last person in California to hear their self titled 7"? I saw them recently with CHAMPION in Santa Cruz, and they impressed me enough to pick it up. This was a re-release that originally came out on Todd Jones' label Generation Fucked back in 2001. This record rules. My favorite song is definitely "Age of Improvement". That breakdown is catchy as hell. Aside from DIEHARD YOUTH, I haven't been listening to much else lately with the exception of the new MENTAL 7". Speaking of Boston's MENTAL, they just got signed to Bridge 9 records and will be going into the studio later this spring to record a new 7". I told you to pick up their first 7", and you didn't listen...

Fahs from CAST ASIDE sent me their new EP on Malfunction. Coincidentally, I was assigned to review it (so check out my write up in the review section). Fahs writes "I've been reading *MRR* off and on for 20 years and they have lost a lot of potential readers over the years because of their usual negative attitude toward straight edge and modern hardcore. Glad to see someone doing more sXe and hardcore reviews. Thanks." That was my first real feedback from a reader, and I am glad it was positive. Thank you, Fahs, for giving this magazine a chance again.

Looking for a smokin' demo with in-your-face straight edge lyrics screamed over songs that clock in at less than a minute? Then look no further than INTERNAL AFFAIRS. Take the speed of STRAIGHT AHEAD and add a CARRY ON flavor, and you get the most hyped band out of LA since TERROR. This is *definitely* down my alley. My only (small) complaint is their choice of covers. "When Tigers Fight" by ALONE IN THE CROWD is mediocre when compared to the rest of the songs on that classic 7". You can download the whole demo for free at www.internalxaffairs.com, or send 2 bucks to 1418 Ramona Dr., Newbury Park, CA 91320.

That's about it for this month. Before you send demos, zines, and limited colored vinyl, you can email me at ih8thekids@hotmail.com. Keep the faith.



Monday January 6, 2003, 4:45 am, I couldn't sleep. I spent all night trying to get work done because I was taking two weeks off to go on tour with the SHEMPS. You know when you go away and you're always forgetting something, or at least you're afraid of forgetting something? My Aunt Betty always thinks she left the iron on whenever I give her a ride to the airport. Well, when I'm in this sort of situation, I always have the same answer. If I have my wallet and my keys, it doesn't really matter what happens, I'll be able to get whatever I want done with the plastic in my wallet, and if I have to drive somewhere or get back home I'm not locked out. I think a lot of people tend to make sure they have their wallet and keys every two or three minutes. It's sort of like when yer at driver's ed and they tell you that all good drivers look in the rearview mirror every three seconds without thinking about it. The thing is, this trip was a little different. Not only did I have to make sure I had my bass, the merch box, directions to all the shows, my phone, everyone's contact info, the van rental reservation, on and on and on. I also had to make sure the other five people involved knew what they were doing.

I'm not really into writing a tour diary—nobody ever reads that stuff unless they were involved, and even then you just sorta scan through the dull stuff to find your name mentioned. I don't understand how anyone can do this sort of thing for six weeks or longer. Even if you have someone to book it and make sure it goes smoothly and someone else to drive, after ten days it cannot be much fun. I love everyone in my band, and I'm one of the most tolerant understanding people I know, but I could see myself wanting to smack someone if I had to go another week.

So instead of doing the whole chronological BS thing, I'm just gonna talk about the people I deal with on an almost daily basis and what happens when I have to deal with them on a minute-ly basis.

Squeaky Dave Wilentz is an odd guy. He's odd in only good ways, but you know how people at work always think yer a little odd because you listen to different music and aren't living some straight boring suburban BS. When ya meet Squeaky, you understand what these people must think of ya. Squeaky speaks fluent Chinese, not for any particular reason. For years people wondered why he had a big beach towel hanging over a painting in his apartment.

Jim Hass, veteran drummer, as well as belonging to every other sketchy club in the universe (I'll spare you the list, but it starts with drummer and it ends up somewhere between teamster and biker). Jim likes me so much, he decided to hang out with me for two days in SF and drive up with me and Artie to meet the rest in Seattle. Jim doesn't share hotel rooms, yet he can sleep soundly anywhere at anytime. Jim played roulette for the first time while me and Squeaky were getting kicked out of the casino for taking photos of Squeaky in the ugliest shirt known to man. Jim busted his knee somewhere early on in the tour, kept talking about going to a doctor and getting massage therapy; he went to the doctor, the doctor gave him drugs. Jim doesn't like drugs, so he gave them to people we stayed with as presents. We aren't allowed to talk to him 45 minutes before we play. It's sort of weird, because in one way, he's the dick guy of the band, yet he meets the most people and does all the schmoozing for us. Like, I'll have to make sure that we can borrow someone's drums for him, but Jim will talk to the drummer of the band for an hour before the show and not think of asking the guy himself. He's also as blind as me, but denies it and drives like a madman. Basically, Jim is 100% entertainment, there is no multimediavideogamingmoviewatchin piece or equipment we could have brought that would have topped Jim for entertainment value.

Artie Philie is another oddity. One minute he's lecturing you about making a mess in the car or not putting the CDs back in the right order, the next he's stealing a case Magic Shell from Pathmark or getting drunk and tapdancing on his eyeglasses. He gets carsick (well, maybe it's just me and Jim's driving) and he insists on sitting up front, but then he nods off or just totally doesn't pay attention to where we are going. He left a few days before to visit his mom and grandma in California, and left his phone in my car. I called everyone with it, and I can do a pretty good impression of Artie's voice. I have to give him credit for being a good sport about breaking his arm in two places at the last show. Yes, he did slip on a burrito at Mission Records—don't believe any cock 'n' bull story he makes up. His ethics are pretty faulty and as much as he tries to make himself out to be a dick, he's a total farce in that category.

Sue Werner announced she was leaving town the week before we left for tour. Sue's one of those people with a dark cloud over their head. The only thing is, this one shoots lightning bolts at her every four days or so. She spent half the tour telling her boss programming codes to fix the web server or whatnot. "It's Et See... See, when yer a Unix nerd, that folder isn't called etcetera, it's pronounced Et See." Sue drove the final night for about 20 minutes when I was blinder than usual and Artie had one arm. We both thought we we're gonna die about eight times as we saw large trucks coming right at us and Sue had no clue they were there. Maybe it was just because I saw that movie

Adaptation twice that month. (They have scenes of car crashes filmed from inside the car.)

It's really nice to be in a band without any weirdness or really insane attitudes—don't get me wrong, we're all pretty insane, but it's nice when you've known people long enough to know what to expect of them and everyone can have a good time no matter what happens.

Anyhow, we all had a great time and I should thank everyone that helped us out or showed up. The AMAZOMBIES, the STUPOR STARS, the ORPHANS, the FLESHIES, CHASED AND SMASHED, the JAG-OFFS, TOYS THAT KILL, DEADLY WEAPONS, PIRX THE PILOT, OCTOBER ALLIED, the PHUZZ, the HEARTACHES, S.H.A.T, and the HOLLOWPOINTS. Floyd, Melissa Oglesby, Nam, Mike Thorn, Ray Wyland, Missy Hennings, Lee Dionysus, Corey Kava, Nicole, Jerry from Christ on a Crutch, Andy and Dougie, Malamars, Chelsey and Kim, Erika, Richie, probably 25 or 30 other people I forgot. Anyhow we'll be back. We're currently looking for a new rhythm guitar player but hopefully we will have one by the time you read this.

Last summer when Carol was feeling out of sorts, I said, "is she pregnant?" It turned out she was. We got to calculating due dates and as she figured sometime in late January, she said that this would be the winter we had a huge winter snowstorm, just as she was ready to go into labor. Well I was feeling in my own senses that this was the winter we would actually have winter, and I held fast to my own feelings, and hers, that it would also mean a big storm. Being a winter baby herself, Carol is not fond of snow. I, on the other hand, am. It's my way of bringing my Northeast roots to Virginia, I guess, by wanting and needing snow. I said, "Don't worry, Carol, we have 4-wheel drive, we'll get you there no matter what," while I jumped up and down and clapped my hands, thinking, "it's going to snow this year!"

So winter came with a bang. It was colder than usual, with more snow than in recent years. We actually had winter this year. As January arrived I kept telling people I know, "we're going to have a big snowstorm this year. Not only because we are due for it, but because of Carol and her baby. It's inevitable that we will have this big storm." Carol's due date ended up being February 7. The week of the 7th, as no signs of labor manifested, I told Carol, "well it's supposed to be really nice this week, almost 50°," to which she responded, "well, there definitely won't be any baby this week then. He/she is going to wait for the weather to turn."

The farmer's almanac apparently had predicted a big storm for February 11. So I got set on that day being the one. Dave had a feeling about the 12th. But the 11th and then the 12th came, and there was no sign of a winter storm, nor any signs of labor. Then, as that week went on, the forecast started talking about snow and ice and the biggest storm of the year. Things started to fall into place.

I had already promised Carol a ride to the hospital in our 4-wheel drive truck last summer, half thinking, of course, that it was wishful thinking on my part. On Wednesday, it looked like Northern Virginia was going to get an ice storm. Carol and Dave's family made plans to come and spend the weekend here in Richmond, just in case. By Thursday, it looked like we were going to be getting some of this storm too. By Thursday night, they were forecasting that Richmond, the place devoid of all weather, would get 8 to 15" inches of snow. Carol had an appointment Friday morning with the midwife. They were planning to induce her labor. It started raining. The hospital decided not to induce her on the weekend when there is less staff on hand, and sent her home with an appointment to return Monday at 7 am. The rain turned to freezing rain and sleet. Sleet started to accumulate. The forecast was that it would turn over to snow and snow heavily Saturday overnight. I was waiting up all night for that snow, but it just kept sleeting with rain and sorta snow mixed in. By Sunday I was so pissed that we hadn't gotten all this snow that was predicted, and I was in a foul mood. No snow, no baby. I felt like the weekend was a total bust.

I went ahead to work Sunday night with an attitude that ice and sleet be damned, this was a joke on me. I called Carol and said, "hey, if you still need a ride to the hospital tomorrow morning, just let me know." I started to worry about freezing rain. The way I figure it is that snow really can't hurt you, but you just can't fuck with freezing rain and ice. So 4 am came around, and I headed out to clear off the truck. It was covered with sleet-snow-mix with a good solid half-inch of ice coating everything. It took me almost an hour to get the car drivable. The conditions were quite a bit worse than I had thought. Fortunately no one was on the roads, 'cause they were actually really bad. It took me about an hour to make the drive to Carol's house, which normally takes about 15 minutes. There is no way I could have made it in my little car. The prophecy was starting to hold true. I dropped them off at the hospital about 6:45 am with instructions to call me as soon as things started to happen. Around 5 pm I was thinking that it would probably be the next day before we met the baby, but just as I was thinking that, Dave calls and says, "you might want to get down here within the hour, things are happening, and they're happening fast." I was surprised, but ready. I took several books just in case. I was thoroughly convinced that it would still be after midnight before the baby came, 'cause labor always seems to be long. But lo and behold, just before 7 pm, Dave comes out the delivery room with his arms high above his head, a huge grin on his face, and his hands in a thumbs-up. I don't even remember what declaration he actually made, 'cause I was so in shock. "Already? Baby? So soon?"

"I have a son," says Dave, the proud beaming father.

Yes, indeed, Carol is a natural. An earth mother and goddess. Only four hours in labor? No pain killers. Not even an aspirin. She is amazing! And a proud glowing mother!

Acie David Brown was born at 6:52 pm on February 17 in the midst of the storm of the century, perfect down to the prophecy. Congratulations to Dave and Carol. Welcome Acie!

I think that this coming spring is going to be amazing. Amazing because after a real winter there is all the more to celebrate as the bulbs start to pop up out of the dirt and the buds start to grow on the trees. Hopefully we have had enough rain and snow to replenish the parched earth and we will have an amazing growing season. I'm so anxious with good expectations.

The downside to this excitement is that it looks like we are on the eve of World War III, and despite worldwide protest and outcry, it looks like this war machine will not be stopped. It's pretty damn scary. But as they say, "Even if the world ends tomorrow, I'll still plant a tree today." And that is just what I'm going to do. It's the beginning of March and it's nearly 70° out. So I am out to sow my garden and protest war and celebrate birth. Keep loving. Keep fighting.

—Chris(tine) c/o Slug & Lettuce • PO Box 26632 • Richmond, VA 23261-6632

Going Down to the Bar

Mark Rainey and TKO Records have been spoiling you fucking hillbillies! TKO has two more installments in the ongoing "Vault of ANTiSEEN" series. First you get the reissue of the 1989 album *Noise for the Sake of Noise*, originally put out on Dogmeat Records from Melbourne, Australia This fucker has twelve studio cuts plus live takes of "N.C. Royalty," "Up All Night," "Hammerhead," and "Destructo Rock." Included are covers of a BOB DYLAN song, a RAMONES song, and a ROKY .ERICKSON song. This was quite an amazing record for 1989, and it has stood the test of time well. Check out the set list: "On Your Knees," "Two Headed Dog," "Mill Workin' Man," "Positively 4th Street," "Cop Out," "Twisted Brain," "Psycho Path," "Nothing's Cool," "I Don't Care," "Burnin' Money," "Crack of Dawn," "Up All Night," "N.C. Royalty," "Hammerhead," and "Destructo Rock." Fuck yes!

The next ANTiSEEN LP reissue by TKO is *Here to Ruin Your Groove*, originally put out by Mike Cooper on his Ruff-Nite Records from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1996. This raw fucker kicks a whole lot of butt with great songs like "Ugly American" and

"Spare Change." These two songs alone could end the discussion—ANTiSEEN are the best rock and roll band in the world!

The third song is a melodic number called "People Like You," with Jamie Hoover playing some piano to sweeten up the mixture. Next up you get "Funk U," which is Jeff Clayton's tribute to famous professional wrestler Terry Funk. The next earth-shaking dose of discomfort is the slow and menacing "Misery (Loves Company)." This fucker is so laden with Clayton's howling and Young's buzzsaw feedback guitar that your stomach will get queasy and off-color. Turn this great LP over and you get the opening cut, "Billie the Kid (A Real American Hero)." This leads right into "Self Induced Lobotomy" that encourages you to raise a beer to DEE DEE RAMONE. The next nugget is an ALICE COOPER cover song, "Sick Things," with co-writer Michael Bruce from the ALICE COOPER band playing lead guitar. On the next song "O.D. for Me," the stakes are higher! There can be no uncertainty about Clayton's feelings about junkies. This song is fast and furious with the full-tilt Southern Scum motor revving at top speed. Song number eleven is "Needle and the Spoon" written and originally performed by A. Collins and Ronnie Van Zandt of LYNYRD SKYNYRD fame. Excellent! The last tune is "Justifiable Homicide," and once again Mr. Clayton does not mince words—some of you fucks don't deserve to breathe this great American air!

Once again, TKO has reminded you—ANTiSEEN are a fucking national treasure!! Some people are slow to catch on, but twenty years into the fray it has become crystal clear- There is no other band anywhere that wields the power of ANTiSEEN! You can celebrate the first two decades of ANTiSEEN's primal rock and roll music with these re-issues! You can prepare your sorry ass for two decades more! For ANTiSEEN product, write to TKO Records, 3126 West Cary St. #303, Richmond, VA 23221, www.tkorecords.com.

Bords de Seine Records from Paris, France has a whole whack of good records and CDs for you this month!

To start the skinhead and street punk mayhem, Bords de Seine gives you GENERATION 69, from Singapore, the Philippines with their 45 *Condemned Citizens*. This excellent 7" starts off with a bang with the political song "A Nation and a Party." Read these lyrics: "Hatred, sadist government, they try to ruin this land/ Segregate them, separate them, get out while you can/ Yellow, brown, black & white, can't see they all unite/ A nation & a party, that makes the people fight!/ One party full of bastards/ One party full of shit/ One party full of bastards/ No better when they meet/ Everywhere you go today, racism still stands strong/ Every step and every move, where did it all wrong?/ Pauline Hanson is a bitch, her ideas full of shit/ A nation and a party, that makes the people sick!" Good shit! Side two of the GENERATION 69 single has the street punk/Oi! anthem "One More for the Bois." This is a good song with passionate vocals and emphatic guitar. This is a very interesting new band to keep your eye on!

The second fine record from Bords de Seine Records is LES POCHES, with their EP *Les Seigneurs de Lager*. This melodic street punk EP starts off with "A.L.F." The lyrics are all sung in French and this song moves along nicely. Well-placed guitar leads augment good vocals somewhat reminiscent of a French version of ANTI-HEROS. The second song is "Soiree Oi!" and this fine tune has a nice TEMPLARS feel to it, with chugging guitar sound. Flip this EP over and you get good street rock with AC/DCU. The prominent vocals with the energetic guitar sound churning behind the final song provides more up-tempo skinhead music called "Tears of Lager." Read these succinct words: "Drinking cans of lager with the drunks that stagger/ You just got laid off and found nothing better/ Living in the real world made by the old/ Society's weak dies in the cold/ There's no time to sink and weep/ You've got a family and pride to keep/ Buy another beer to reflect and think/ Reflections of the past/, life is a jinx/ Got kids that you have to feed/ Afraid of the wife that might yell and scream/ At least with drink nothing will get you down/ You've been here before and you'll get around/ Every man needs a taste of beer/ To think of his needs or face his fears/ Every man leaches a lonely tear/ When he drinks a wholesome beer."

Item number three from Bords de Seine this month is CRI d'ALERTE with their *50 Cl.* EP. These French beer-drinking punks and skins come out blazing with "Cri d-Alerte," their theme song. This has excellent guitar playing, good sing-along chants, and strong lead vocals. Song number two is "Cauchemar Anime," which produces more good streetpunk. Turn this rascal over and CRI d'ALERTE sing "L'homme des Tavernes," which has a great combination of punk riffs, Oi! style singing, and chugging heavy guitars. Song four is "Du Venin..." and this number takes a little different approach. The introduction is quite melodic with a pub-rock feel to it and then CRI d'ALERTE crunch into a great SUBWAY THUGS style of skinhead punk. This is a good record!!!

The fourth good EP for you skinheads and punks is LOURDS 5 with their EP *Touche Pas a Mon Bock*. This French band plays a hearty and solid brand of Oi! and street punk sung in French. The gruff vocals complete with harmonies and very good guitar playing make for a strong record! On side "A" the LOURDS 5 get the ball rolling with their theme. "Oi! The Lourds!!" which has good ringing guitars and deep vocals. Song two on side A is "Je Suis un Pilier" and this tune is faster and churns up a really agitated three minute street punk frenzy. Side B has one really good melodic Oi! song with brute force, husky vocals, and that ever-present chugging Oi! guitar part. "Cellier" ends this EP in fine style—"Oi! Band Breton!" The LOURDS 5 are a talented bunch of skins and punks!

The punk rock just keeps coming from Bords de Seine! The fifth hammer coming your way this month is KK 44 with their EP *Un Hospice Pour Crever*. This gruff Bordeaux, France collection of bad men produce a tough sound with the extra deep and growled vocals and threatening guitar sounds. On side "A" KK 44 smash you in the face with the mid-tempo song "Ce Soir Cést La Fin," this leads into a somewhat harrowing bit of street music, the title cut: "Un Hospice Pour Crever.". Side B starts out with a faster more spirited Oi! number, "Le Temps de Creuser." Very good! This EP takes a small breather between songs three and four with some quiet vocal parts and then all hell breaks loose! "Vive La Morte!" cracks some heads with magnum-force singing and inescapable dangerous guitar rhythms.

Also available on Bords de Seine this month is a stomping new CD by GROUPUSKULL. This French skinhead band has deep guttural Oi! style singing, group harmonies and powerful guitar parts that contain some metal runs. Very good! The material is sung in French and the printed lyrics are in French. Some of the songs start out slow and then pummel you with hard Oi! vocals and fervent guitar blitzkrieg.

On the "Triste Realite" CD you get fourteen well-crafted Oi!/street rock tunes with lots of passion and driving guitars and drums. GROUPUSKULL is quite good at this type of music.

Next up in the calvacade of skinhead hits from Bords de Seine is the new CD by OEIL POUR OEIL. This new effort is called "*...Nés Pour En Chier....*". This is rough and tumble French Oi! with extra deep and throaty vocals. The guitars percolate along nicely while the band members supply enthusiastic choruses. This is strong Oi! with excellent melodies pushing the whole CD to the next level. A favorable comparison to Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A.'s TERMINUS CITY could be made. On songs like "Perpete," "A Boire!," "Mesrine," the title cut, "New Pour En Chier," and "Necrophile" OEIL POUR OEIL show their power! These guys are one of the most fearsome and awe inspiring skinhead outfits on Bords de Seine at this time! For all this fine product, write to Bords de Seine, BP85—75561 Paris CX12, bdskinhead@aol.com; www.bordeseine.fr.st.

That fine street punk/ skinhead band BULLDOG SPIRIT has a new CD out on Brutus Records; this fucker rocks your world with top quality Oi! The songs are all tough as nails and sung with conviction. In their thank-you list these guys mention Australian friends A.V.O. and THE BLURTERS so you know they keep good rock n' roll company. Check out this selection of songs: "March of the Bulldog Spirit," "Fake," "This is Babylon," "Stand Up...Fight!" "Show No Remorse," "Won't Back Down," "Judas," "Bleeding Hip Pocket," "Last Warning," "Junkie," "Black Sheep," "Drop the Bomb," "Pain Is Only Temporary," and "In This Together." There's very good Oi! here for you fucks! Lyrics from two of the songs that bear further investigation are printed below. Read the words to "Bleeding Hip Pocket"and"BlackSheep.""BleedingHipPocket." "The government takes what the government needs/ I've got a hip pocket that's always bleeding/ I pay for hospitals, roads and sewers/ Because of this I'm never gonna be too rich/ Then there's those that take and take/ While my back it breaks and breaks/ Let the system take care of their needs/ Take the cash then bite the hand that feeds/ I've got a hip pocket that's always bleeding/ I've got mouths that always need feeding/ No matter how much money I make, it's never enough, it's never enough/ Then there's those who have got enough cash/ To avoid their dues and to keep their

stash/ They're laughing all the way to the bank, With their friends in power to thank/ The banker takes his cut wherever he can/ Providing less but taking more/ Those fucking banks know the score." "Black Sheep." "Call me antisocial and I'll tell you that's no lie/ Tell me how to live my life and I'll spit right in your eye/ I've always been an outsider in this society/ And I'll live my life an outsider if it means living free/ Being a black sheep—is never easy/ But following the herd—is just insane/ Never wanted mainstream, never wanted to fit in/ Never followed fashion, never became a victim/ Stay true to yourself and not what they want you to be/ Self-respect is more important than conformity/ Being a black sheep—is never easy/ But following the herd—is just insane/ I've gotta live my life to be free/ Freedom, give me freedom, give me freedom, to live free!" This is good shit with hard rocking music and lyrics written from the heart! For BULLDOG SPIRIT CDs as well as new product by ARTHUR KAY, FRANKIE FLAME and BILLY BOY E LA SUA BANDA, get in touch with Brutus Records, Canada, Italy, and Australia. These guys carry lots of Oi! street punk, and skinhead material from all over the world. Get in touch via www.brutusrecords.com or www.drunkenskinhead.com.

Until next month, see you down at the bar!

I've written a few columns in the past where I shared some of the resources that I regularly use to dig up information on corporations or on the business world in general. It's been a while since I've done one and, figuring as how the present state of the world is well worth paying attention to, it seems like pretty good timing for it.

So here's one of those. Much of the stuff on this list is only vaguely related to economic issues but, then again, you could say that about my column. The idea of the list is to let you know what sources I often use for both my information and reading enjoyment and to let you know where you can locate them. Check 'em out if you think they sound interesting. If you think I missed something really obvious, write and let me know what it is because it might not be that obvious to me.

Magazines

Z Magazine – If you've never read *Z*, you should. Continually some of the best articles on the state of the world and, even better, some solid ideas on how to improve it. You can subscribe from their website at: www.zmag.org (more on that later…) or write them at 18 Millfield St., Woods Hole, MA 02543. If you live somewhere with a decent library, you may be able to find it there or you could buy it from a cool, local bookstore. If all of that fails, you can find it a Borders or Barnes & Nobles nearest you.

Adbusters – Although I've been a little disappointed with Adbusters lately because they seem to have gotten a bit too carried away with design to devote enough space to solid, informational articles (and because their regular cover price is inching closer to that of a paperback book), they are still putting out a fascinating magazine. Guaranteed to make you think.. 1243 W. 7th Ave., Vancouver, BC V6H1B7 Canada or www.adbusters.org Again, a decent library will have it and you're local bookstore probably has it too.

Multinational Monitor – When it comes to facts and opinions regarding the corporate giants, no one puts out better material than MM. A relatively cheap, no-frills sorta magazine, packed to the hilt with good info. PO Box 19405, Washington DC, 20036 www.multinationalmonitor.org, local bookstore or library.

Stay Free! – *Stay Free!* is a magazine that contains all of the things that *Adbusters* is missing. An intelligent, and sometimes comical, look at the world of commercialism. *SF!* publishes rather sparsely and doesn't cost a lot. I would recommend subscribing to it, but note that I, for no apparent reason, have not yet done so myself. If I do want to subscribe, I'll write to them at 390 Butler St. 3rd Fl. New York, NY, 11217 or visit www.stayfreemagazine.org (nice segue, eh?)

The Baffler – More like a big zine or journal than a magazine, which helps justify its rather sporadic publishing schedule. Anyhow, *The Baffler* contains lengthy, intelligent articles with a large percentage relating to the joys of money and capitalism. I highly suggest that you try and hunt down back issues of this puppy. PO Box 378293, Chicago, IL, 60637; a cool bookstore, or a really cool library.

Clamor – One of the best magazines out there, focusing on as many different aspects of life as possible, including a continual section devoted to economics. It's great and I'm not just saying that because yours truly occasionally contributes. Do yourself a favor and subscribe (bi-monthly). Visit www.clamormagazine.org or write PO Box 1225, Bowling Green, OH 43402.

The Progressive/In These Times –These monthly mags have a very similar theme and structure. Both are highly worth reading regularly as they give great political insight on an up-to-date basis. However, I have to admit that the former has better writers than the latter and seems to be a bit better overall. You can pretty much find either of these magazines anywhere except grocery or department stores.

Websites

www.corpwatch.org Corpwatch has one of the best online sources for up-to-the-minute information and articles on the big bads with lots of searching capabilities.

www.zmag.org Website for the aforementioned *Z Magazine*, but way more than mere promotion. This site has piles and piles of articles by all the smarty-pants radicals and plenty of searching capabilities and links to other interesting sites.

www.hoovers.com Hoover's has been publishing its guide to corporations for decades now, listing their finances, major players, addresses, histories, and main competitors. The website offers a stripped-down version of the book. If you want to know the basics for any given company, Hoover's is a good place to start.

www.nyse.com Like the last site, the New York Stock Exchange's website is not one that you go to with the idea that you'll find a bunch of articles highly critical of the some of the most powerful businesses in the world. However, they have lots of straightforward info on all of the companies that trade through them (which includes most multinationals based in the US). A good place to keep an eye on the current financial status of your favorite multinational business.

www.mcspotlight.org or **www.walmartwatch.com/index.cfm**, etc. Plenty of the companies out there have entire websites devoted to all of their misdeeds. Here's the best one's for McDonalds and Wal-Mart, respectively. If you want to find one on some other crappy transnational, simply type their name into a search engine and you'll probably hit plenty of matches.

Books

Culture Jam by Kalle Lasn. The editor of *Adbusters* put out this gem a few years back. It's basically a diatribe on the different ways that corporations are controlling our lives and some thoughts on how to defend ourselves as well. A good, thought-provoking read.

No Logo by Naomi Klein. This will mark the third month in a row that I've mentioned this book. The point is: read it if you haven't. Klein also just put out a new book called Fences and Windows, which I haven't read yet. However, judging by her past offerings, I think I can safely say that it'll be well worth reading.

Everything For Sale by Robert Kuttner. This book is more about markets than the corporations that control them, but it is nothing short of amazing. Chock full of information, I highly recommend this book if you're into the whole "intellectual economic criticism" thing (and we all know you are).

Corporations Are Gonna Get Your Mama, edited by Kevin Danaher. This book is not quite as silly as its title and cover suggest.

However, it's a great read for those just getting into the subject of corporate control. A handful of different subjects by a handful of different writers, including Chomsky and Nader.

Corporate Predators by Russell Mokhiber and Robert Weissman. From the respective editors of *Corporate Crime Reporter* and *Multinational Monitor*, comes this collection of their weekly columns that cover any aspect of the corporate takeover that you could possibly imagine. Some of the articles in here are a bit dated but, overall it's packed with tons of relevant facts and opinions.

One World, Ready or Not by William Greider. This book details the scatterbrain logic of globalization and all of the complexities it causes in our lives and in our world. Highly recommended.

Manufacturing Consent by Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky. This details the various ways that governments and media companies conspire to misconstrue what we regard as truth. Mandatory reading (and the documentary film of the same name is also required).

(The rest of these books are a bit more focused on specific industries or companies, but are definitely worth reading for a closer look into things.)

Fast Food Nation by Eric Schlosser. You can guess what its about, but you have no idea how much information can be packed into one book until you read this sucker. Highest possible recommendation.

The Media Monopoly by Ben Bagdikian. Currently in its 6th edition, this book is a classic. It details the growing concentration of the media industry and shows exactly what this will mean for the average citizen (hint: it don't look good). An excellent resource.

Toxic Sludge is Good For You! By John Stauber and Sheldon Rampton. The fun of the public relations industry.

In Sam We Trust by Bob Ortega. The fun of Wal-Mart.

Just Do It: The Nike Spirit in the Corporate World by Donald Katz. The fun of Nike.

Disney Discourse: Producing the Magic Kingdom by Eric Smoodin. The fun of Disney.

I also try to scan a few of the major mainstream publications like The Wall St. Journal, Barron's, Forbes, or Fortune. Yes, they suck, but they're loaded with information right out of the wolves' mouth. I don't recommend you give them any of your money though. If you spend a lot of time in a library (which ain't such a bad idea really), you can peruse them and learn a whole bunch of freaky shit.

If you want to write me something (or send a zine…you know the drill) it's c/o Rainbow Bookstore Cooperative, 426 W. Gilman St. Madison, WI 53703.

The Corporate Misadventures of a Working Girl

It lasted for three years but now it's over. It was surreal. I couldn't talk about it in mixed company. I had to explain it at length to my good friends. I led a double life.

I really liked my job.

My job with the stuffiest old-money outfit there is. Look this company up on Google and the first things you get are accusations that they purposely supported the Nazis (I don't think that was true but it tells you something). On the application I had to "describe (my) interest in banking." I'd love to know what I wrote, I'm sure it's hilarious. I got hired because the job market was ridiculously easy and the woman who interviewed me had been an English major too. I started at a salary that I think is higher than anything either of my parents has ever made. Real fuckin' American Dream time. In six months I stepped up to a new position and began using the English skills I'd learned in college. Sure, the material was boring, but I was thrilled to be working with language and getting paid for it in something other than As and Bs.

More importantly, and why I—who thinks money itself is immoral—was able to not only work indirectly for corporations I despise, supporting investment in countries that no doubt use sweatshop and slave labor, but to really like it, is because these people seemed to appreciate and reward a job well done. After too many years of being piss poor and working shit jobs engineered to make people expendable and make sure they are aware of it, I had a career. Everyone was nice and said thank you for everything I did. I simply paid attention and got told I was a quick study. Times were good; we were always getting lunches, stupid t-shirts, goodies. I got raises and bonuses. I thought "This company could take care of me for life. Maybe I don't wanna be a big wheeler-dealer and become a partner, but I could do OK."

Another reason I could rationalize it was that I worked for a partnership and not a corporation. A group of people is personally responsible for the actions of the company, unlike the corporate structure, where the corporation is considered a person for legal purposes (how *fucked up* is that?) and no one is really accountable for anything it does (for more information on the sketchy origins of this arrangement, check out *The Incorporation of America* by Alan Trachtenberg, Hill and Wang Publishers, 1982). This somehow made it possible for me to walk into the fancy polished granite and mahogany lobby of my work with Aus Rotten in my headphones going "Come put on a suit, come work for us, for all that you hate, and all that you distrust." Sure, it got to me sometimes. And there was the double-life thing. I had to hide my tattoo. Avoid anyone from work I saw on the street when my hair was spiked. The last Dropkick Murphys show worth going to (yes, the really sweaty one in Southie), I had to go straight from work but I couldn't change there, I had to find a public restroom.

So what happened? A year ago I got bored. I'd learned all I could about a business I'm not even interested in. I'd been reading the same crap for three years. The economy tanked, in this beautiful monetary system of ours that is based on nothing but whims instead of human rationality. My coworkers got really petty and bitchy.

Now my boss has gone on to a well deserved, better position. This could be the thing, I thought, I'll get a challenge, I can keep going with this. Nope. She was not replaced by me or anyone else. I am now supervised by a former "Corporate Actions" guy (don't worry about what that means—essentially, nothing. The worst kind of drone.) who has no idea what I do and hasn't bothered to ask before micromanaging. I'm not getting developed, I'm getting asked to write down how many minutes I spend on every little thing I do. Rhetoric like "our greatest asset is our people," "our great client service is our hallmark" still dribbles out of the highest mouths occasionally, but in reality everyone who works for this company is considered an adversary. We are not asked to stick together and keep doing a good job with less, to use our creativity to help the firm to do well in a bad environment, but it is assumed we are idiots and we are told that adequate is enough. All the crap I bought into, all the pride I took in my work, down the toilet. I called in sick today because I just couldn't deal with it.

And all this money I make? I took a hard look at the numbers and it turns out with Boston rent and general high cost of living, credit cards I racked up when I was unemployed, and student loans, I am *still* spending more than I earn. I am a rat on a fucking wheel. I could do this for the rest of my life and never get out. Trapped, just like Aus Rotten said. For what?

I realize now that liking my job was a dream. Few jobs will ultimately ever be "good," fulfilling, fair, not a daily source of misery, in a system based on greed. I notice now that the people who stick around in places like that are the people that accept that and either tolerate it (slow death) or use it to their own advantage (scumbagism). I don't blame my coworkers too much, though; the system sets people against each other. When you become convinced that you have to do something you hate and be miserable every day, or you have to screw other people over to get ahead, you see your only choice as doing that or failing to achieve anything or provide for your family. It gets attached to powerful emotional forces like parental instinct and self-esteem.

The people who accept this are the "guard" class Howard Zinn talks about (in *A People's History of the United States of America.* I'd tell you the page number but everyone should read the whole thing.). In a way, these people are to blame for their blindness and complacency, but in a way they are just duped.

But the reality is that you have to keep a roof over your head. It's a reality I've had to face many times and find myself facing again. Please don't write in to say what a sell-out I have been if you still live with your parents or do enough drugs to make living without a shower seem cool and revolutionary. I haven't had a stable family home to go back to since I was 16. It's been all me, and I've done the best I could. Really worthwhile things cost money: like music, whether you are making it or just buying it. I wish it wasn't that way but right now it is. And all I know right now is that I'm working on my resume and I have no illusions and I'd like not to be too self-destructive trying to (not?) deal with it.

And, like so many others out there, *I hate my fucking job.*

In a weird way, it's good to be back.

PS. I wanna hear you bitch: marymary@cbgb.net. Also, the Profit$ rule. I used to be one. If you've read this, make sure you have read Erika's column too.

Look closely at George W. Bush's neck the next time you see a photo of him or a speech on television. Is it my imagination or are there bolts sticking out of his neck? They're there even if his publicity department and makeup artists have hidden them well. Bush is a monster and quickly becoming the most notorious one America has ever produced in fiction and in fact. I won't say he's the most evil man in the world. I'm sure there are worse. But he is the most dangerous by far. He is an unintelligent, ignorant, self-righteous spoiled brat with his hands on the most lethal weapon mankind has ever known. And he is our creation, our Frankenstein. We made him, the American public. Let there be no mistake about it. We did it.

George W. Bush is the product of our arrogance, our ignorance, our avarice, our unabated gluttony, our lack of integrity, and our refusal to take responsibility for our own actions. We assembled him piece by piece, decade after decade. We all did it. None of us are truly innocent in this. Every one of us had a part. Every employee who put in their eight hours doing a half-assed, half-completed job with little regard to the outcome and left promptly at 5:00, a chip on their shoulder and the attitude that their employer owed them, inserted a bolt. Each time one of us cheated a bit on the rules for our own gain, we tightened a screw. Every citizen who complains about gas prices but drives a Suburban to work helped dig up the corpse. Every Little League Dad who teaches his that kid winning is everything and then encourages him to rub defeat in the face of his opponent inserted an organ. All of us who live to buy more and more toys and play hard were the ones who snuck into the lab to steal the brain. Every parent who voted against, or didn't vote at all, to support school bond elections and then proceeded to complain about the poor grades of their darlings, hooked up the electrodes. And let's not forget the voters and people who should have voted but didn't in every past Presidential election. How many of them made their decision, and such an important one, on appearances, on what they saw on the television news, which we all readily admit is a manipulative biased infotainment media rather than a credible source? How many constituents simply didn't bother to vote because it got in the way of their play time? How many simply don't bother to even register? We have all worked so hard together to assemble this heinous monster. And finally, as a society, we threw the switch bringing life to it.

Let's stand back and take a good look at what we've created. Our Commander in Chief is a dense, spoiled rich kid who's been given the biggest and most dangerous toy in the world. He has average intelligence at best. The extent of his experience in foreign affairs is a vacation trip to Mexico. He has never held the type of character-building job we all have. He's never worked in a gas station, fast food restaurant, or retail store. I doubt his first car was a beat-up old Ford or crumbling Volkswagen Beetle. Clearly, from his speeches, he is not well-educated or cultured, regardless of whatever degree Daddy bought him. His family connections took advantage of the system and bought his way out of service in the National Guard. Daddy bought him oil wells, a baseball team, and a Governorship. And how can we ignore the fact that Daddy's appointed Justices and Florida Brother Jeb connived to weasel him into the Oval Office? I would not want this man as a dinner guest or someone to share a beer with or principal of my son's school, let alone President. And now he's lying, cheating, stamping his feet, throwing tantrums to get what he wants. The cost to our society and country without a war is already horrendous. With it, it will be unimaginable. None of us will live long enough to see the mess cleaned up, even if it ever is.

However, this is our way. This is the American way. This is how we do things. We are a society of spoiled children. If not George W. Bush, it would have been somebody else. He was inevitable. He is the current link in the chain. Clinton had his part. So did George Senior, Reagan, Nixon. Even the immortalized John Kennedy was a link. Is it any wonder we're so vilified worldwide we inspire men with families to fly jumbo jets into skyscrapers? For years we've allowed our leaders to apply a hypocritical foreign policy based on doing whatever they want so long as we get what we want: SUVs, widescreen TVs, high-tech electronic gadgets, mobil homes, jet skis, oil, oil, and more oil. Our international athletes as ambassadors of our culture are an undignified embarrassment. Recall numerous incidents at various Olympics held around the world. When we win we're bad winners. When we lose we're even worse and again, spoiled children throwing tantrums. Look at the US Olympic hockey team in Nagano trashing their hotel rooms. Look at speed skater Anton Ohno, a spoiled brat if ever there was one, who was directly involved in controversy after controversy. How about our basketball Dream Teams? This is fair play? We should be proud when they humiliate Portugal 134 - 52 and then gloat because they kicked ass?!

The concept that our form of democracy is the only one which protects human rights, the only one other nations should adopt, the *only* one, is absurd and arrogant as hell. These are different cultures with different values, different religions and different societies with different ways of thinking. They're entitled to their own different form of government, right or wrong. Who are we to impose our ways, by force, on the rest of the world? And yet, we all seem to have the false belief our way is the only way. Having lived abroad for only three years I can testify—it's not. It might work for us—although right now it isn't—but it's not going to work for everyone.

The current Bush administration and the corner we've allowed it to paint us into is all our fault. We have a beautiful and special country here and a great Constitution. However, the time has come to put away childish things, to grow up and take a long hard and painful look at ourselves as a society. We must examine ourselves honestly for the faults in ourselves that have led to what, if let unchecked, will certainly be our downfall.

—PHESSWOLL@aol.com

Thank god for Scotland. Without those goddamn bog-trotters, tonight would be a bit more painful. However, thanks to out tartan-clad friends, my nerves are quite dull at the moment, and the fact that Our Fearless Leader has plunged us into America's second war in just two years is a wee bit easier to take. Instead of throwing this fucking computer out the window, I am writing on it. Thank god for the Scotch.

One of the things that makes this war so hard to comprehend is that there is nothing to comprehend. There is no reason for this war. Hell, with the last Gulf War you could point to the invasion of Kuwait or oil or protecting Saudi Arabia—things I disagree with but solid explanations. With the bombing of Serbia you could dig up Bosnia and rape camps. But there is nothing here. This is a war that George W. Bush and his cohorts pulled out of their asses. No wonder it stinks.

Listening to Bush a few nights ago—the evening he threw down his ultimatum—I had a little hope. I thought the Limeys would send Tony Blair packing, but the English failed again, so

salvation is with their northern neighbors. Of course, the media jerked themselves to ecstasy over Bush's ultimatum. "A fine speech," they commented. "What an orator." So enthralled these pawns were that they didn't notice that every one of the president's utterances was either a lie or a distortion. The Iraq/Al Qaeda connection has been proven false time and again. The insinuation that Iraq has nuclear weapons is absurd. And referring to the United States' ignoring the United Nations as "diplomacy" is nothing less than rape of the English language. No comment from the media on all that. And no mention that the president was either drugged or had a few pops. His speech was slurred and he looked like a mess. I think the man is either on drugs and/or drink or he is insane.

I do know one thing—and perhaps this explains the war—Bush is a True Believer. The man believes he is carrying out God's will. He insists that his every act is guided by Providence. Think about that for a while. The President of the United States thinks that he is a cipher for God. Remember what this country thinks of people who claim to be on a mission from God. David Korresh. Jim Jones. The Reverend Moon. We not only consider these folks crackpots, but we think them dangerous. And on this point, I would agree with American groupthink. And I would also advise that we apply the same standards to Our Fearless Leader.

Take a trip down memory lane with me. It is the mid 1980s and a fellow named James Watt is the Secretary of the Interior under President Ronald Reagan, a fellow who looks better and better as the days wear on. Watt was a Christian Millenniumarian. He believed that we were living in the End Times and that there was no reason to protect the environment. Rapture was coming so we might was well chop down every tree we can. Watt fumbled when he denied the Beach Boys from playing DC's annual July 4th celebration—he thought they were playing the Devil's music. His weirdo beliefs became public knowledge and he was out of work. Nowadays we have a man in America's top job who is just as much of a True Believer as James Watt. He also is a man who has had lifelong problems with substance abuse (cocaine, booze, etc.). He has never held a job based on his merit. His jobs were either given or stolen for him. He dodged military duty. His daughters are drug addicts, which tells me he has failed as a parent. And he became president based on an election ripped off for him by his brother. Add this up and you wouldn't let the man run a goddamn fast food restaurant; but here he is, president of the most powerful nation in the world and now he and his advisors have started a war without any reason behind it. Back to Bush's psycho-spiritual beliefs. The man has referred to his cause against Iraq as a crusade. He thinks he is a mere finger on the hand of God. And he believes that the salvation of the world is his responsibility. To think that this most recent spasm of ultra-vi is religiously inspired is not a reach. Here is one of our "Great Thinkers," St. Augustine: "The true believer must not condemn war but must look upon it as a necessary evil, as a punishment which God has imposed upon men. For war is, like pestilence and famine and all other evils, on a visitation of God for the chastisement of men for their betterment, and to prepare them for salvation." Combine that notion with the belief that one is carrying out the will of God and you have George W. Bush's little war.

Let's forget this dark night for a second and examine the stated justification for this war. Bush and his cohorts have told the world that this is a "preventative war," that the US, Great Britain, and a few countries hot for US aid are striking against Iraq so that Iraq does not strike the US and its pal at some date to be determined by Iraq and, perhaps, God, but we really aren't sure, however we know that Iraq is bad and that is what bad people do. This line of thinking is not exactly new. Ronald Reagan's invasion of Grenada was justified as a preventative strike. Grenada, if you recall, is a spit puddle of an island in the Caribbean. In 1983, had the nerve to hire some Cubans to build an airstrip capable of servicing major airliners, something Grenada needed to fuel its tourist industry. Reagan insisted, without proof, the air strip was for Soviet fighter planes and, as a preventive measure, launched Operation Urgent Fury and destroyed the strip. A few years earlier Israel launched an air strike on Iraq's nuclear reactor at Osirak in 1981. Israel's justification for the attack was that Iraq could have some day used that nuclear reactor to use make nuclear weapons that it might one day use against Israel. A few nations hooted in protest but the US was there to back Israel—even though Iraq was then an ally. So the idea of preemptive strikes are not new. However the reality of preventative war is. Back in 2000, the US Commission on National Security/21st Century, chaired by former US Senators Gary Hart and Warren Rudman, issued a report called "Seeking A National Strategy: A Concert for Preserving Security and Promoting Freedom" (http://www.nssg.gov/PhaseII.pdf).

The report sought to come up with a new national "defense" strategy that would serve the US in the 2001 century. The report calls for such things as strengthening the international community through increased trade and lessening trade restrictions, the sharing of intelligence information, and working through international and regional groups to solve problems and make the world more secure. It also states that when these things fail—the success and failure being determined by the United States and not its fellow nations—preventative diplomacy should be used. If diplomacy fails—again, as defined by the US—then preventative war would be necessary. The report was widely received with little criticism and many of its ideas—including preventative war—were adopted by the Bush administration. So we know what preventative war is but what does it mean? The *Sacramento Bee* is correct in asserting that "launching a preventative war marks a radical departure both from our own traditions and the norms of international life. And the way it was launched...may mark the end of an international system that has served America well."

It also makes the world a much more dangerous place. Consider this: Under the doctrine of preventative war, any nation can attack another nation because it thinks that the target nation may pose a threat to its national security. If we are to use Bush's war as a precedent, proof that a nation is a threat does not have to be provided. The claim that one has proof and the rattling around of papers is all that is needed. Because the United States has struck first using this rational, other nations who fear that the US might be a threat to them, can now attack the US, claiming the right to make preventative war. This is not a stretch. One of Bush's main advisors. Richard Pearle, has publicly stated that, after Iraq, the US will have to deal with North Korea, Iran, and Syria. Pearle and others have urged US action on that kettle of KAOS, Cuba. Pearle urges that the US use military force, not diplomacy. Given the United States, war on Iraq and a past that has included invasions and bombings of Grenada, Nicaragua, Libya, Yugoslavia, Somalia, Sudan, Panama—not one county who had declared war or attacked the US—I would say that any of the "rogue nations" have something to fear from the US. That being so, are they now allowed to attack America first?

Let's get off of America for a bit. Let's look east of Iraq, to the Pakistan/India border. Both countries hate each other. Both have a long history of attacking each other. Both are currently in a border dispute. Both have nuclear weapons. And both could claim the right to declare preventative war on the other. How 'bout Israel and the Arab nations? There is no love there. Arab nations have attacked Israel in the past and Israel has invaded and bombed its neighbors. There are those in the Arab countries who believe that as long as Israel exists the region is not safe. And there are those in Israel—including the mob in power—who think that all of its neighbors are out for Israel. And Israel has nukes. The former Soviet Union does not offer much hope. The relationship of Russia with its neighbors, including members of the CIS, are always strained. There are divisions between former Soviet Republics that go back to tribal days. Down in Africa, ethnic groups fear each other and routinely look for a reason to rid themselves of their enemy.

And the situation around the globe is not any better. Preventative war does not mean the end of war, as our Fearless Leader would like us to believe. No, it means quite the opposite. The protocol for war has just been abolished. With preventative war now a precedent, there is nothing to stop a nation from attacking another. Ryan Wells, a friend and a scholar, writes me "if the US goes nuke [in the War on Iraq in retaliation for Iraq using chemicals], every county on this planet with any industrial capacity is going to try to buy/develop nukes. The message is simple: If you have nukes, the US will leave you alone in any int'l conflict. If you don't, we'll smash you flat as a bug." Ryan is even more correct than he knows. Regardless of whether the US uses nukes or not, I think the message is: If you have nukes, we leave you alone. If you don't and we still think you are a threat than we crush you—as a rule, the US does not attack nations who can blast back. By dumping on diplomacy and

going with preventative war on bluster, the US has given the world one defense: The possession of nuclear weapons.

So here we sit in a world far more dangerous than it was just two days ago. Our fate has been determined by a group of people in Washington who are bent on Empire and whose front man believes he is God's messenger. The American public lets the government expand its police powers with little protest. The public is even silent about that fact those in power are their due to a stolen election. And, man, do I have a hangover. My friend Josh Chaffin sent me an email that simply said, "Fuck this war." To which I replied, "Yeah, and the horse it rode in on."

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"I feel it coming on just like it did before. They feed your pride with boredom and lead you on to war. The way they treat each other makes me feel ill. Cuz if you want a war you'r just dying to get killed. A pox upon the media and everything you read. they tell you your opinions and they're very good indeed. I wanna destroy you!"
—The Soft Boys

As I sit here bombs have begun falling on Iraq. There are so many feelings and emotions running rampant through my head right now. I'm disgusted. I'm outraged. I'm saddened. I'm frightened. I've spent the day staring in disbelief at the television screen, trying to make sense of it all in my head. I knew this was coming, but I still can't believe that it is finally upon us. I mostly just feel numb. All the protests, all the anger—it almost feels like it's been for nothing. The largest mass protests against war in mankind's history have seemingly done nothing. War is upon us and will remain with us, in one form or another, for what could be the rest of our lives. As American warplanes pound the Iraqi soil, I am left wondering, why? I know the rationale that is being sold by the Bush administration—weapons of mass destruction, he's evil (aka regime change), supports terrorists and so on—but I'm still not buying.

I fear what this means in terms of global power politics—as the United States assumes its role as the leading imperial power on the globe—a planet where American exceptionalism takes preeminace over the reamainder of the world. This first strike policy is a dangerously slippery slope for the world to be headed down. The possibilities for total world war are endless when you're using "might makes right" and "an eye for an eye"as your primary models for international relations. This is the precedent and example we are setting as the dominant world power. If we can do it with Iraq what is to stop India from marching into Pakistan or North Korea from launching a preemptive assault on South Korea?

Watching the news makes me wanna fucking retch—the way the media allows itself to be manipulated and guided by Bush, Fleischer, Rumsfeld and the rest. Memories of the well gaurded controls on information from the first Gulf War come flooding back. They keep pushing this notion of how history is being made with these embedded reporters, how you the viewer at home will be able to watch the war as it unfolds! Like sports! Of course, the media will only report what the government allows them to report, which doesn't always correspond with what *needs* to be reported. Nothing new, I know, as that has been fundamental press policy for the Bush administration since they came to power. The play by play football game style reporting in regards to our killer arsenal of weapons is disgusting. The look of awe on the faces of reporters as ravenous generals tell how fucking kick ass our "smart bombs" are makes me wanna throw the fucking television off the roof (maybe I should anyway, right?) None of this comes as a suprise to most of you astute and cerebral punk rockers, but a reminder, it's times like these that alternative sources for news become more important than ever.

Be certain to pay attention to Nathan's column this month—lotsa good info and resources for you to check out. Also, to echo a bit of Mykel's column, where are the bring-the-war home folx? Going to those monthly RCP (ahem, ANSWER)-sponsered peace protests has become more and more mundane. Woohoo! Look at us wandering around aimlessly like sheep under the watchful eye of the San Francisco Police Department. Fuck that. In sharp contrast, the hit and run protests that have managed to shut down the city of San Francisco for the last two days have been simply amazing. It's still too early at this point to really have an acurate perspective on everything, but right now I'm beaming. It's not going to stop the war, but it sure does show that we're not going to take their shit.

Endnotes:

1) Famed Bay Area punk venue, Burnt Ramen, is gone. See John's letter in this issue. It sucks a lot as it was a rad place for shows. Next issue I'm planning on running something about it, and the shut downs of a number of other spaces across the country (including ABCNoRio)

2) I'm planning on doing a Bay Area scene report on a fairly regular basis, so please do get in touch with me with info about what you and your pals are up to. People in other parts of the country should do the same.

3) Don't get caught.

4) Send me presents via the *MRR* PO Box, or email me via mikethorn@maximumrocknroll.com

Well, here we go again. The US military has announced a handful of new "operations" in the last few days. Jake swore up and down one of them was called "Operation Cameltoe." I ask you—we have no national healthcare; how the hell can we afford all these operations?

Chicken-with-its-head-cut-off time at MRR: final deadline. I'm trying to finish up this issue and get out in the streets, so I'll cut this short. Yesterday, the day after war was declared, protesters took over intersection after intersection, street after street, in downtown San Francisco, often closely trailed by hundreds of riot cops. Many, many arrests. In attendance were thousands of well-meaning, courageous people, including Kathleen Hanna and a homeless guy with a chicken.

This war is terrible, and it wasn't inevitable, either. We can't prevent it, now, but we can (read: must) try to stop it. If you are doing anything to resist the war where you live, and I hope you are, let us know, OK? Thanks.

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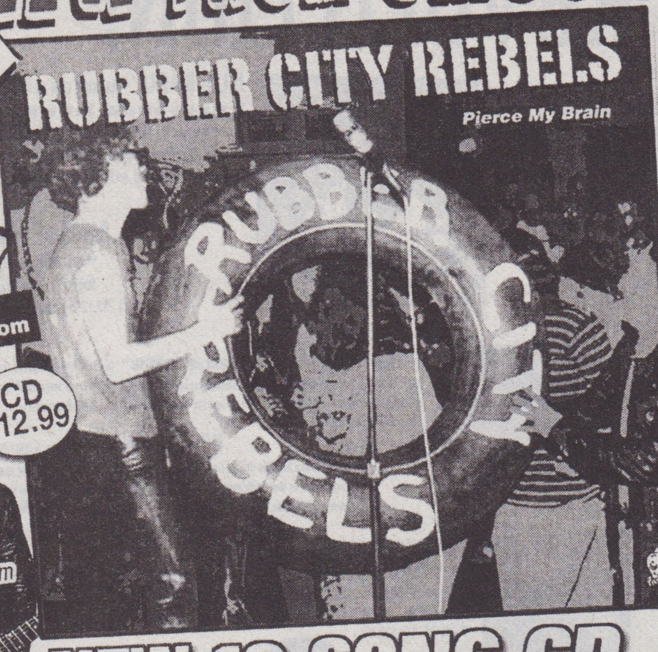

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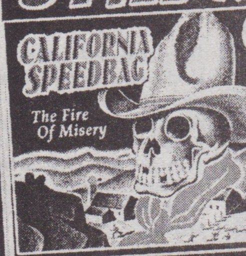

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MRR NEWS

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Arwen Curry

FROM THE STREETS OF SAN FRANCISCO TO THE CITIES OF BANGLADESH, MILLIONS UNITE TO VOICE THEIR PROTESTS

by Andrew Gumbel
Published on Friday, March 21, 2003 by the Independent/UK

San Francisco
photo by James M.

Demonstrations against the war in Iraq erupted on every continent yesterday. Millions of people opposed to the United States-led military invasion abandoned their work or studies and took to the streets.

Most protests were peaceful although a handful became violent, usually when police in riot gear sought to keep marchers away from American embassies and consulates. In some Muslim countries, the protests gave renewed vigor to Islamist political parties that are using the war as a recruiting tool.

In the West - including the US - participants expressed their concerns that the Bush administration was recklessly leading the world to a more unstable future.

Thousands of Egyptian demonstrators shout anti-U.S. and British slogans during a protest against the U.S.-led war on Iraq following Friday prayers outside Al-Azhar mosque in Cairo, the highest Islamic Sunni institution, Friday, March 21, 2003. (AP Photo/Amr Nabil)

In Brussels, around 3,000 people protested as European Union leaders were opening a summit to discuss the Iraq war. Four people were detained for throwing rocks at the US embassy and police used water cannons when a burning object was thrown at the American flag outside the embassy.

"Stop the Bush fire," they chanted in Berlin. "US warmongers go to hell!" read a banner in Calcutta. In Cairo, the largest city in the Arab world, anti-American sentiment accompanied expressions of anger at the country's leadership, which is pro-American and a big recipient of US aid. The discontent highlights the danger of political upheaval across the Middle East in the wake of the war.

"Down with Arab leaders!" the crowd chanted, as riot police used water cannon to prevent about 1,000 students armed with stones from approaching the US embassy. Cries of "Leave, leave Mubarak!", a reference to the Egyptian President, Hosni Mubarak, could also be heard.

Mr Mubarak and his security forces have given an increasing degree of leeway to anti-war protesters in recent weeks, perhaps to create an outlet for growing anti-government sentiment. But that did not stop police near the US embassy from swinging at protesters' heads with batons.

Other protests scattered across the Arab world included 1,000 women and children burning US and Israeli flags in the Gaza Strip and a clash between riot police and 1,000 demonstrators outside the British embassy in Beirut.

In the Philippines, riot police used truncheons to break up a small group of protesters who burnt an American flag and portraits of President George Bush and Gloria Arroyo, the President of the Philippines. She has stood staunchly by the United States in the war on terrorism.

In Indonesia, a Muslim party organized a rally in Jakarta while in Semarang, Java, police clashed with 50 students after they burnt an effigy of the US president.

In Pakistan, protesters denounced "American terrorism", and in Bangladesh left-wingers and Muslim politicians joined hands as they burnt US and British flags.

Italy's three biggest unions organized a two-hour general strike. "We want to bring cities to a standstill," said Luca Casarini, a union organizer."We don't want people to get used to the idea of war, to think that it is normal."

Demonstrators peacefully occupied train tracks in Turin, blocked a motorway in Barcelona, marched through the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, and flooded through Athens streets. Many of the hundreds of thousands of participants were schoolchildren.

Riot police in Geneva fired tear gas and rubber bullets on a crowd of 500 high school and university students marching towards the US mission to the United Nations. "Non à la Busherie!" they chanted, playing on the French word for butchery.

In the United States, much of the anti-war sentiment that gave rise to hundreds of protests in towns and cities across the country a month ago has subsided as people feel obliged to support the troops and pray for their safety. But the anti-war spirit was very much alive in San Francisco, where hundreds of protesters, many of them linked with metal pipes, blocked streets and motorway slip roads to disrupt morning commuters and initiate what they described as a "festival of resistance".

Participants received a hasty training session early yesterday on non-violent disobedience before taking up their posts. Hundreds of cars and dozens of buses were held up in traffic jams. Much of the financial district was surrounded. "We can't just go on with our lives when people are dying," said Carol Maddox, an occupational therapist.

At some intersections, protesters stood placidly as the police hauled them off. At others, the police simply kept watch as the participants chanted slogans. "Bush, you liar, we're going to set your ass on fire," one banner read.

In Washington, a much smaller group of about 150 protesters temporarily shut down the inbound travel lanes of a road running across the Potomac river. About 50 more cycled into central Washington with signs reading "bikes not bombs", and outside the White House a further 50 demonstrators shouted: "No blood for oil!"

While the police were generally patient with the protesters, the onset of the war has changed the mood at American military bases. In response to plans for a demonstration at Vandenberg Air Force base in central California this weekend, officials warned that anyone found trespassing would be subject to a new shoot-to-kill policy.

DEEP CONCERNS

by Noam Chomsky
March 20, 2003

At this grim moment, we can do nothing to stop the ongoing invasion. But that does not mean that the task is over for people who have some concern for justice, freedom, and human rights. Far from it. The tasks will be more urgent than before, whatever the outcome of the attack. And about that, no one has any idea: not the Pentagon, the CIA, or anyone else. Possibilities range from the horrifying humanitarian catastrophes of which aid and relief agencies that work in Iraq have been warning, to relatively benign outcomes—though even if not a hair is harmed on anyone's head that will in no way mitigate the criminality of those willing to subject helpless people to such terrible risks, for their own shameful purposes.

As for the outcomes, it will be a long time before preliminary judgments can be made. One immediate task is to lend what weight we can to more benign outcomes. That means, primarily, caring for the needs of the victims, not just of this war but of Washington's vicious and destructive sanctions regime of the past ten years, which has has devastated the civillian society, strengthened the ruling tyrant, and compelled the population to rely on him for survival. As has been pointed out for years, the sanctions therefore undermined the hope that Saddam Hussein would go the way of other murderous tyrants no less vicious than he. That includes a terrible rogues gallery of criminals who were also supported by those now at the helm in Washington, in many cases to the last days of their bloody rule:
Ceausescu, to mention only one obvious and highly pertinent case.

Elementary decency would call for massive reparations from the US; lacking that, at least a flow of aid to Iraqis, so that they can rebuild what has been destroyed in their own way, not as dictated by people in Washington and Crawford whose higher faith is that power comes from the barrel of a gun.

But the issues are much more fundamental, and long range. Opposition to the invasion of Iraq has been entirely without historical precedent. That is why Bush had to meet his two cronies at a US military base on an island, where they would be safely removed from any mere people. The opposition may be focused on the invasion of Iraq, but its concerns go far beyond that. There is growing fear of US power, which is considered to be the greatest threat to peace in much of the world, probably by a large majority. And with the technology of destruction now at hand, rapidly becoming more lethal and ominous, threat to peace means threat to survival.

Fear of the US government is not based solely on this invasion, but on the background from which it arises: An openly-declared determination to rule the world by force, the one dimension in which US power is supreme, and to make sure that there will never be any challenge to that domination. Preventive wars are to be fought at will: Preventive, not Pre-emptive. Whatever the justifications for pre-emptive war might sometimes be, they do not hold for the very different category of preventive war: the use of military force to eliminate an imagined or invented threat. The openly-announced goal is to prevent any challenge to the "power, position, and prestige of the United States." Such challenge, now or in the future, and any sign that it may emerge, will be met with overwhelming force by the rulers of the country that now apparently outspends the rest of the world combined on means of violence, and is forging new and very dangerous paths over near-unanimous world opposition: development of lethal weaponry in space, for example.

It is worth bearing in mind that the words I quoted are not those of Dick Cheney or Donald Rumsfeld or other radical statist extremists now in charge. Rather, they are the words of the respected elder statesman Dean Acheson, 40 years ago, when he was a senior advisor to the Kennedy Administration. He was justifying US actions against Cuba—knowing that the international terrorist campaign aimed at "regime change" had just brought the world close to terminal nuclear war. Nevertheless, he instructed the American Society of International Law, no "legal issue" arises in the case of a US response to a challenge to its "power, position, and prestige," specifically terrorist attacks and economic warfare against Cuba.

I bring this up as a reminder that the issues are deep-seated. The current administration is at the extremist end of the policy-planning spectrum, and its adventurism and penchant for violence are unusually dangerous. But the spectrum is not that broad, and unless these deeper issues are addressed, we can be confident that other ultrareactionary extremists will gain control of incredible means of devastation and repression.

The "imperial ambition" of the current power holders, as it is frankly called, has aroused shudders throughout the world, including the mainstream of the establishment at home. Elsewhere, of course, the reactions are far more fearful, particularly among the traditional victims. They know too much history, the hard way, to be comforted by exalted rhetoric. They have heard enough of that over the centuries as they were being beaten by the club called "civilization." Just a few days ago, the head of the non-aligned movement, which includes the governments of most of the world's population, described the Bush administration as more aggressive than Hitler. He happens to be very pro-American, and right in the middle of Washington's international economic projects. And there is little doubt that he speaks for many of the traditional victims, and by now even for many of their traditional oppressors.

San Francisco
photo by James M.

It is easy to go on, and important to think these matters through, with care and honesty.

Even before the Bush administration sharply escalated these fears in recent months, intelligence and international affairs specialists were informing anyone who wanted to listen that the policies Washington is pursuing are likely to lead to an increase in terror and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, for revenge or simply deterrence. There are two ways for Washington to respond to the threats engendered by its actions and startling proclamations. One way is to try to alleviate the threats by paying some attention to legitimate grievances, and by agreeing to become a civilized member of a world community, with some respect for world order and its institutions. The other way is to construct even more awesome engines of destruction and domination, so that any perceived challenge, however remote, can be crushed—provoking new and greater challenges. That way poses serious dangers to the people of the US and the world, and may, very possibly, lead to extinction of the species—not an idle speculation.

Terminal nuclear war has been avoided by near miracle in the past; a few months before Acheson's speech, to mention one case that should be fresh in our minds today. Threats are severe and mounting. The world has good reason to watch what is happening in Washington with fear and trepidation. The people who are best placed to relieve those fears, and to lead the way to a more hopeful and constructive future, are the citizens of the United States, who can shape the future.

Those are among the deep concerns that must, I think, be kept clearly in mind while watching events unfold in their unpredictable way as the most awesome military force in human history is unleashed against a defenseless enemy by a political leadership that has compiled a frightening record of destruction and barbarism since it took the reins of power over 20 years ago.

THIRD U.S. DIPLOMAT RESIGNS OVER IRAQ POLICY

Published on Friday, March 21, 2003
by Reuters

WASHINGTON - A third U.S. diplomat has resigned partly because of opposition to U.S. policy toward Iraq, a State Department official said on Thursday.

Mary Wright, deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Ulan Bator, Mongolia, cited U.S. policy toward Iraq, North Korea and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as reasons for her decision to step down, said the official, who asked not to be named. The official did not know when Wright's resignation took effect.

"I strongly believe that going to war now will make the world more dangerous, not safer," Wright, the senior-most U.S. diplomat to step down over Iraq, said in a letter to Secretary of State Colin Powell that quoted by the *Washington Post.*

The newspaper said Wright also criticized what she called a "lack of policy on North Korea" and a "lack of effort" by Washington to try to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Wright followed John H. Brown, a former cultural attache at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, and John Brady Kiesling, political counselor at the U.S. Embassy in Athens, in stepping down this year because of U.S. policy on Iraq.

The United States began its war against Iraq on Wednesday by bombing targets on the outskirts of Baghdad and it attacked key sites in the Iraqi capital with cruise missiles on Thursday in an effort to end Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's rule.

War Inc.

American corporations with close ties to the White House are poised to cash in on Saddam's defeat. French companies need not apply.

By Farhad Manjoo

As the prospect of war with Iraq comes ever closer, companies with expertise in combating oil-well fires have begun to publicly complain that the U.S government has not been forthcoming with details of the firefighting services it may require in the Middle East.

Their concern is not abstract; many experts think it is likely that Saddam Hussein may duplicate his behavior in Kuwait and destroy Iraqi oil fields in a last-gasp gesture of defiance. So, early in March the Department of Defense finally announced that it had developed a plan to deal with the possibility, and on Thursday the Pentagon posted a toll-free phone number on its Web site to provide "a recorded message ... on the information necessary for firms to be added to the bidders list." After just a few hours, the phone number had been overwhelmed with calls; by the afternoon, a message said that the voice-mailbox was full, and it offered no details on how firms could bid for firefighting contracts.

The overloaded Defense Department bidding line provides a good illustration of the frenzy for war that is building in some sectors of the business community. It's not just the firefighters; many companies see war in Iraq in a favorable light, as a significant source of new business.

Representatives of these firms won't say so in so many words, certainly, and some—like the firefighters or the construction companies that will rebuild critical infrastructure in Iraq—convincingly defend their work as necessary to immediately aid civilians and repair a war-ravaged nation. War is hell, but when the fighting is over, somebody's got to make things better. What's so wrong with profiting from the deal in the process?

But even if there's nothing exactly new about making money from war, this particular conflict, a preemptive war of choice, presents the somewhat novel prospect of the U.S. government deciding how war profits will be distributed even before the first sorties are launched. Whether you think Iraq will be "conquered" or "liberated" by American forces, regime change in the country will open up vast new opportunities for commercial interests to do business there, and the Bush administration could have wide latitude in determining which of those interests win out. Already, companies are jockeying for prime positions, and already there are signs that the White House is being nicest to its friends.

On March 10, for example, the Wall Street Journal reported that the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) had invited a handful of large engineering firms to bid on a $900 million contract for rebuilding Iraq. The Journal described the agency's efforts as "quiet," but "secret" seems a more apt term. In a procedure designed to respond to "urgent circumstances," the agency decided not to put out a public notice soliciting engineering bids and instead approached select firms "with a proven track record," said Ellen Yount, an agency spokeswoman.

All of these firms are American, and many have close ties to present and former government officials. One of the companies is Kellogg Brown & Root, a subsidiary of the Halliburton Co., the firm that Vice President Dick Cheney ran during the 1990s. (KBR also developed the Pentagon's firefighting plan.) USAID declined to discuss the sort of work it had asked the companies to do, and several of the firms would neither confirm nor deny that they had been contacted by the government regarding Iraqi reconstruction. The others were only slightly less reticent, admitting they were part of the group but refusing to discuss details of USAID's request.

On Wednesday, top U.S. foreign policy experts, working on behalf of the Council on Foreign Relations, released a report estimating rebuilding in Iraq to cost up to $20 billion per year for "several years"; it's reasonable to expect, then, that after the war, contracts worth much more than USAID's initial $900 million request will be made available to firms.

The news that some well-connected American firms will be first in line for these billion-dollar deals did not help the Bush administration's case for war internationally. Headlines all over the world questioned the White House's true motives for war. During a session of the British Parliament, one Liberal Democrat member asked Prime Minister Tony Blair why his allies in the U.S. had "pointedly excluded British and foreign firms." Vincent Cable, the M.P., continued, "Is the prime minister not embarrassed to have given such unstinting loyalty to an American president who regards international cooperation with such contempt and war as an opportunity to dish out contracts to his cronies?" Blair dodged the question, but his spokesman told the British press that the prime minister hopes the United Nations, and not the U.S., would head the rebuilding effort.

It's hyperbole to argue that the Bush administration wants to invade Iraq only for the benefit of its friends in the corporate world (though some people no doubt believe that). For some businesses—most notably the airlines, which fear billions in losses if there is a war—an invasion will likely be terrible for the balance sheet. But, as in the Gulf War, some companies will make a bundle from an attack, and one doesn't have to be very conspiracy-minded to notice that these are the very same firms that have intimate ties with the Bush administration. Is it unreasonable to think that the high-minded goal of bringing freedom to Iraqis exists, in this White House, alongside many less noble political calculations—for instance, old-fashioned corporate opportunism? Or, making sure that the spoils of war stay out of the hands of the troublesome French?

In the waning days of the Gulf War, estimates for the cost of rebuilding Kuwait, which had been plundered by Iraq's occupying forces, ranged in the hundreds of billions of dollars. Construction and oil-services firms saw the country as a bonanza. Even before the exiled Kuwaiti government had been fully restored, it was welcoming reconstruction bids from foreign companies. American executives were the most assiduous deal makers, visiting Kuwaiti royals at their base in Taif, Saudi Arabia, and beating European firms to multibillion-dollar deals.

It turned out that Kuwait was a smaller prize than businesses had initially anticipated—reconstruction cost tens, not hundreds, of billions of dollars. But U.S. firms got the lion's share of the work, with one company, Bechtel Corp., a private, family-owned and very secretive firm based in San Francisco, ending up with the main rebuilding contract, worth an estimated $2.5 billion.

Bechtel has a legendary history of setting its sights on large projects and successfully networking with influential people who can bring those projects to the company. The firm built the Hoover Dam, the subway systems in San Francisco and Washington, D.C., the tunnel under the English Channel, and many U.S. nuclear power plants. In his book "Friends in High Places: The Bechtel Story: The Most Secret Corporation and How It Engineered the World," the journalist Laton McCartney outlines Bechtel's ties to powerful people, many of them Republicans. Caspar Weinberger, Ronald Reagan's defense secretary, was once Bechtel's general counsel; Reagan's secretary of state, George Schultz, is a former Bechtel president. "Gerald Ford had also lent a hand, as Richard Nixon had before him, and Ronald Reagan after him, by trying to give Bechtel commercial access to the nation's most secret nuclear technology," McCartney writes, citing one example of Bechtel's reach. And Bechtel is no stranger to the current Bush administrati

Not surprisingly, Bechtel was one of the companies selected by USAID to bid for a contract in Iraq. "We are one of the world's leading engineering and construction firms, so if there's infrastructure work to be done in Iraq, we have extensive experience in doing that," Jonathan Marshall, a spokesman for Bechtel, said. But Marshall was wary of Bechtel being seen as pushing for a war. "We do hope for a peaceful resolution here," he said. "If there's work to be done it should be done in an atmosphere of peace and not war. We're not trying to take advantage of anything here."

Parsons, a construction company based in Irvine, Calif., is another of the major firms contacted by USAID. Parsons also did well in Kuwait, landing a contract worth hundreds of millions to expand the country's refining capacity. But when asked what kind of work the company might do in Iraq, Erin Kuhlman, a spokeswoman, said that any Iraq contract would be similar to the rebuilding efforts Parsons headed in Bosnia and Kosovo in the 1990s. Such a contract would, in Kuhlman's description, have little to do with oil.

"The bulk of the aid money that went to Bosnia and Kosovo was to firms that provided labor and equipment to make repairs," she said. "We went in and we cleared areas for mines, and then we organized construction teams to restore water supplies, rebuild roads, hospitals, schools, all sorts of infrastructure that had been damaged in the war."

Kuhlman added that if American firms get rebuilding contracts in Iraq, they would likely employ Iraqis to do the work. "What we did [in Bosnia and Kosovo] is we were the program managers and we hired local groups," Kuhlman said. "People are saying that all the money is going to be coming to American firms, but in fact that's not the way it works. The money goes to the local firm."

The other main contender for business in Iraq is Kellogg Brown & Root, owned by Halliburton. As the New York Times reported last summer, the war on terrorism has been good to KBR. After the Sept. 11 attacks, the company was selected to build a permanent base for detainees held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. KBR was also awarded a 10-year, open-ended contract to provide logistics supplies—managing everything from dining operations to power generation—to the Army.

But Halliburton has recently been going through a rough period, too. The company has been dogged by a host of class-action lawsuits seeking damages stemming from asbestos-containing products made by some of its subsidiaries. As part of a $4 billion settlement it reached in 2002, KBR, the unit likely to do work in Iraq, is expected to file for bankruptcy later this year.

The company's proximity to the White House may also not be as much of an asset as one would expect. Last year, when corporate accounting scandals were making headlines, the news that Halliburton was being investigated by the Securities and Exchange Commission for alleged accounting improprieties during

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continued from previous page

Cheney's tenure caused much unwanted press for the firm. Now, according to some industry analysts and political experts, the government may be reluctant to award Halliburton a contract precisely because it would appear unseemly.

"It certainly wouldn't be ideal if they gave the first contract to Halliburton," says Bathsheba Crocker, an expert on postwar reconstruction at the Center for Strategic & International Studies. "There are certainly many people out there who already think this is all about the Bush administration getting access to Iraqi oil in the first place."

Still, says Crocker, if Halliburton is indeed passed over in the first round, that won't be the end of the story. "Brown & Root often does work for the government, and I have no doubt there would be enough to go around" in Iraq, she says.

As many academics, pundits and lawmakers have noted during the past year's war debate, ousting Saddam Hussein could turn out to be the easy part of regime change in Iraq—the difficult part would be rebuilding a nation suffering from two decades of warfare and sanctions.

"It's not going to be cheap," says Patrick Garrett, an associate analyst at GlobalSecurity.org. "There's going to be a cleanup after the military, because some of those things—say if cluster munitions are used—could have a long-term effect on the country. But it's not just cleaning up after the war, it's essentially rebuilding the whole country. There will be school reconstruction, roads, and helping to rebuild the economy that was there before the Gulf War, before the sanctions."

But the biggest prize for American firms like Bechtel and Halliburton will be a contract to repair Iraq's oil industry. On March 6, the Pentagon announced that it had "reliable reports" indicating that Saddam Hussein may be planning "to damage or destroy Iraq's oil fields, potentially causing a crisis for both Iraq's people and its neighbors."

The government said that "Iraq has received 24 railroad boxcars full of pentolite explosives" that would be used to blow up the country's oil facilities, similar to what Iraqi forces did to Kuwait's oil industry in their retreat during the Gulf War. The destruction of Kuwaiti fields caused enormous environmental damage -- 5 million barrels of oil were dumped into the sea, an "impact twenty times larger than that of the Exxon Valdez disaster," according to the government. (Seeking to label Saddam Hussein a "terrorist" any way it can, the Pentagon described the Kuwaiti fires as an act of "eco-terrorism," an incorrect use of the term. According to the FBI, "eco-terrorism" is done with the intention of saving the environment, not damaging it.)

Mike Miller, the CEO of Safety Boss, a Canadian oil-well firefighting company that helped fight the Kuwaiti fires, expects that oil fires in Iraq—which he thinks are very likely to be set—will be the biggest event his industry has ever seen. Iraq has more oil fields spread out over a larger area than Kuwait, "so it would be much bigger, and cause potentially much more environmental damage," Miller says.

But Miller fears his firm will be shut out of the bid process. "Whoever gets this firefighting contract has got to have a huge political contact," he says, "and we're a little concerned because as a Canadian company we don't have access to the American government. I guess I would say that once the fires start it would be hard to ignore us—we did have the best record in Kuwait and the world will ask why we're being left out." But so far, he has had little contact with American officials, and he worries that because Canada has been somewhat noncommittal on a war—officially, the government wants to give Saddam Hussein until the end of March to comply with inspections—his company will be left out of the initial plans.

Miller's situation raises an interesting question. If the war in Iraq turns out to be an almost entirely American affair, with foreign governments refusing to go along with the effort, and American troops doing much of the fighting, and American taxpayers bearing much of the cost, does the White House have any obligation to see that foreign firms take part in efforts to rebuild Iraq, enjoying a fair shot at the billions that will be spent upgrading the country's oil infrastructure? Some people in government, the kind of people who want to replace the word "French" with "freedom," may have already concluded that once the U.S. military secures the peace in Iraq, U.S. companies would be justified in securing the dollars. But experts warn of obvious political fallout from such shortsightedness.

If the White House is seen as favoring American firms, especially American firms close to the Bush administration, it could serve as just the proof antiwar critics need to conclude that the U.S. is invading Iraq for the basest reasons—money and oil.

In the Middle East, the United States is vulnerable to the charge that it is an imperialist power; Saddam Hussein's government regularly accuses the Bush administration of seeking to enslave Iraqis. "It is very politically incorrect to do this," a Saudi Arabian contractor recently told the Middle East Economic Digest. "Look at the Gulf war. Bechtel said that because the Saudis had been good to Kuwait it would source everything locally. Then it had everything flown in from Houston. A lot of Saudis remember that, and Bechtel is not flavor of the month here because of that."

Michael Renner, a researcher at the Worldwatch Institute, wonders whether the Bush administration might be trying to send some not-so-subtle political cues to governments that are now on the fence in the war. "It seems to me that the way it comes across, whether intended or not, is you're sending a signal that if the rest of the world is not going along with this, your companies aren't going to get all the contracts," he says. "They're saying, 'Anybody out there, if you want to get on the bandwagon, this is a good time.' Maybe we should take George Bush at his word when he says, 'If you're not with us, you're against us.' He may mean that not only in political terms, but also in business terms."

But Renner predicts a huge international outcry to American profiteering from war. "If that's what plays out, if there's a sense that this carries a commercial side to it as well, then given the fact that public opinion is very much up in arms against the current policy, that there's a rather unprecedented groundswell of opinion against this, I wouldn't be surprised if people react very angrily to it."

US IS CRITICIZED FOR ITS PLANS TO USE LAND MINES WITH TIMERS

by Ross Kerber
Published on Thursday, March 20, 2003 by the Boston Globe

To deny Iraqi forces access to sites containing chemical or biological weapons, US military commanders have plans under certain scenarios to drop small land mines from warplanes around enemy weapons sites, preventing Iraqis from taking away or using dangerous arms.

The more the US uses or retains the right to use land mines, the more the government is on the outside of the international norm banning these indiscriminate weapons of terror. Leftover land mines take a huge toll on civilians, 800 deaths per month worldwide, according to the United Nations Children's Fund.

To minimize civilian casualties during and after an assault, US military doctrine calls for almost all mines to include timers that cause them to self-destruct after a preset period.

The mines also include deactivation features, so they will eventually disarm themselves, even if the timers fail. A newer generation of computer-controlled land mines meant to further reduce civilian casualties won't be ready in time for an invasion of Iraq.

But the US policy on mines is at odds with that of Britain and most other nations, which have agreed not to use land mines. In Britain, members of Parliament are demanding that their forces stick to a treaty it has signed banning use of land mines.

There is a dispute whether the kind of mines that US forces plan to use would be a violation of the treaty, although the United States has not signed it.

In the United States, opponents of land mines say that the use of such munitions in an attack on Iraq would be a blow to the campaign to ban their use. That campaign took off in the 1990s with the backing of figures like Vermont activist Jody Williams, who shared the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize for her advocacy against land mines, and the late Princess Diana.

"The more the US uses or retains the right to use land mines, the more the government is on the outside of the international norm banning these indiscriminate weapons of terror," said Gina Coplon-Newfield, coordinator of US Campaign to Ban Landmines, a Boston group that first called attention to the Pentagon's intentions. "No land mine is smart enough to distinguish between a soldier and a child."

Members of Congress including Representative James P. McGovern, Democrat of Worcester, have also called on President Bush not to use land mines in Iraq.

In a letter last month to Bush, McGovern said that spreading land mines in Iraq "would pose serious dangers to innocent civilians, our own troops, and future peacekeepers involved with post-conflict reconstruction."

Since 1997, 131 countries have ratified a treaty banning such weapons. Neither the United States nor Iraq has agreed to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production, and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, which is better known as the Ottawa convention.

The Clinton administration said it would try to end the use of land mines everywhere except Korea by 2003 and in Korea by 2006. The Bush administration is reviewing the policy.

"We are committed to developing a policy that addresses both humanitarian and war-fighting concerns," said a Pentagon official who would only respond to questions on condition of anonymity. In an e-mail message, the official said that any use of land mines by the United States would be consistent with international laws on conventional weapons and that allied nations "that are parties to Ottawa would follow their own obligations in accordance with that treaty."

"At the same time, the United States has a responsibility to protect its men and women in uniform," the official wrote. "The use of land mines by US forces does not contribute to the global land mine problem." Members of Britain's Parliament have asked the government of Prime Minister Tony Blair to seek assurances from US officials that mines won't be used in an attack on Iraq.

"It would be a tragic irony if a conflict that is supposed to be about upholding international arms controls resulted in the UK and others effectively tearing up their commitments," said Richard Lloyd, director of Landmine Action, a London organization that lobbies against the weapons and runs mine-clearing operations in Africa. Steve Atkins, a spokesman for the British Embassy in Washington, said Britain remains "fully committed to our obligations under Ottawa."

"The US is well aware of our position on antipersonnel land mines," he said.

But the use of mines described by the Pentagon might not violate the Ottawa convention under an interpretation in which the mines could be classified as "antihandling devices," Atkins said. Unlike mines, which are meant to kill or injure, Atkins said, antihandling devices are meant to prevent the enemy from using equipment or facilities, like a weapons factory.

US plans to deploy land mines came to light at a press briefing at the Pentagon March 5 that focused on how US forces would try to minimize civilian casualties in Iraq.

During the briefing, a defense official described how small land mines could be used to prevent enemy forces from gaining access to a site containing chemical or biological weapons.

"You might deny access to that [site] by using self-destructing small mines—and these are air-deliverable—that have a 24-hour or 48-hour self-destructing capability. And so you could keep people from going in and taking something out of that facility," the official said.

US military spokesmen declined to identify the official who gave the March 5 briefing, except to describe the official as a senior officer from the US Central Command in Tampa, which directs operations in the Middle East.

The official didn't specify which mines could be used. But military specialists said what the official described was a cluster bomb like the CBU-78 Gator, a 500-pound cannister that scatters 45 tank and 15 antipersonnel mines.

An antipersonnel mine ejects tripwires when it hits the ground and kills or maims by a blast of fragments. The US military said safety devices that disarm the weapons after 48 hours should reduce civilian casualties.

But activists in the campaign against land mines said such weapons are little different than older antipersonnel devices that kill thousands of civilians a year long after conflicts have ended. They said that within the first two days the weapons can injure medical personnel and other noncombatants and that the self-destruction timers can fail.

US defense contractors are working on a replacement mine, known as the "non-self-destructing antipersonnel land mine alternative." Designers envision a mine activated only after a US soldier has verified the enemy's presence.

WORLD CONDEMNS IRAQ WAR, FEARS FOR CIVILIAN LIVES

Published on Friday, March 21, 2003 by Agence France Presse

World leaders condemned the launch of a US-led war against Iraq and pleaded for civilians to be spared, with some accusing Washington of flouting international law by striking Baghdad without UN backing.

"France regrets this action undertaken without the approval of the United Nations," French President Jacques Chirac said in a televised address.

"It hopes that operations will be as rapid and as victim-free as possible and does not lead to a humanitarian catastrophe," he said.

France spearheaded opposition to the US and British push for war, vowing to veto a UN resolution that would have paved the way for military action and thus forcing the two to go it virtually alone against Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

Russia and Germany, firmly aligned with Paris in the anti-war camp, denounced the outbreak of war.

In Moscow, President Vladimir Putin described the US-led offensive as a "serious political mistake" and called for an immediate halt to hostilities.

Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder called war a "defeat for politics" and said "a bad decision was taken," but in cautious comments he and top German ministers focused on post-war reconstruction of Iraq rather than heaping blame on Washington.

"This is bitter news," Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer said. "We hope the hostilities will be completed as quickly as possible and that the civilian population will be protected."

China, a UN Security Council permanent member also opposed to war, appealed to the "relevant countries to stop the use of military force."

India, another nuclear power, joined Beijing in calling the US-led attack a violation of the UN Charter.

The Vatican also "deplored" Washington's move, with Cardinal Roberto Tucci, a close confidant of Pope John Paul II, saying the war went beyond "all legality and all international legitimacy".

Pope John Paul II, for months a key moral voice opposing war, "deplores that negotiations under international law to find a peaceful solution to the Iraqi drama were interrupted," his spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls said.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan urged the United States and Britain to do everything possible to protect civilians from undue harm and suffering during their campaign to unseat Saddam.

"I hope that all parties will scrupulously observe the requirements of international humanitarian law, and will do everything in their power to shield the civilian population from the grim consequences of war," he said.

Mexico, a Security Council member heavily sollicited for support during the UN diplomatic drive, came down against its northern neighbor, with President Vicente Fox stating: "We are against the war."

Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada restricted his reaction to the hope that the conflict "will be brief, with a minimum number of victims on both sides". On Monday he had called the war "unjustified".

In the Middle East, the Palestinian Authority strongly condemned the military campaign by US President George W. Bush, warning Israel not to use the conflict as a pretext for stepping up incursions in the Palestinian territories.

Arab states Jordan and Saudi Arabia said they were worried about the conflict in the region, while others denounced Washington as tens of thousands of their citizens rallied in the streets and called for a holy war against the United States.

In Beirut, Lebanese President Emile Lahoud warned: "We see this aggression today plunging the world into a tunnel where one cannot see the end."

In Turkey, the parliament approved the right of US warplanes to use Turkish airspace although not its bases for raids against Iraq, but President Ahmet Necdet Sezer voiced opposition to the US-led war shared by the vast majority of Turks.

"I do not find the unilateral US action right", he said.

But not all reaction to the start of US-led military action against Baghdad was negative.

Australia reaffirmed its commitment to the campaign with an announcement from Prime Minister John Howard that Australian special forces had begun combat duties alongside US and British forces.

Japan and South Korea also reiterated their support for the United States.

"I understand the start of the use of force by America and support it," Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said in Tokyo, while South Korean President Roh Moo-Hyun said he would send non-combat troops to the region.

Bush's decision to go to war with Iraq found strong backing among several eastern European states, which have been torn between their desire to join with EU neighbors to the west, and to back the US, thereby scoring points with the most influential member of the NATO.

NATO-ally Hungary's Prime Minister Peter Medgyessy said the conflict with Iraq was "unavoidable", while Bulgaria, Romania, Lativa and Estonia renewed their support.

The Czech Republic and Slovakia, which have sent anti-chemical specialists to the Gulf, said however they could not join military operations because they lacked a UN mandate.

In Britain—the closest US ally—Foreign Secretary Jack Straw described the onset of war as the last chapter of Saddam's iron-fisted rule, and the beginning of Iraq's liberation.

"We are with you. We support you," Straw told a press conference, in remarks directed at the Iraqi people. "We want to see your suffering come to an end."

Spain, a strong voice in the pro-war coalition, said international law would be strengthened by Saddam's ouster. "The government of this nation supports the re-establishment of international law so that conditions for peace and security prevail," Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar said.

And in Italy, where hundreds of thousands of anti-war protesters greeted the first day of war, Foreign Minister Franco Frattini called the disarmament of Iraq "a tragic necessity" for the international community.

Excerpted from the Sacramento Bee
By Herbert A. Sample and Dorothy
Friday, March 21, 2003

SAN FRANCISCO—Thousands of vocal and determined anti-war protesters brought San Francisco's Market Street to a standstill from dawn till dark Thursday, while more orderly protests in Sacramento drew hundreds to college rallies, church services and candlelight vigils.

Across the nation, peace activists hit the streets, blocking traffic and creating major disruptions in Los Angeles, New York and Philadelphia.

But, as the military conflict between the United States and Iraq began in earnest, thousands of Americans also turned out to support the war—including 2,000 who gathered outside Mississippi's state Capitol in Jackson.

In San Francisco, which the New York Times dubbed "the anti-war movement's epicenter," riot-clad officers made more than 500 arrests by midafternoon, according to police. By nightfall, police officials estimated arrests at between 1,300 and 1,400.

Even so, protesters held the upper hand for much of the day. They blocked intersections by sitting and interlocking their arms, or by sprawling on the street. Several created human chains by placing their hands in metal or plastic pipes. Sparks flying, firefighters used circular saws to cut them apart.

San Francisco's demonstrations, which generally were non-violent, began at 7 a.m. City police and county sheriff's deputies, joined by California Highway Patrol officers, moved from intersection to intersection along Market Street, trying to keep traffic flowing. But the activists, shooed from one corner, simply regrouped at another.

The scene was raucous. One demonstrator with a megaphone began singing the French national anthem. Later, a small, ragtag band marched and played in front of the police line.

Scores of arrestees were rounded up for a time in a makeshift holding area at Sansome and Market streets, their hands clasped behind them with plastic handcuffs.

"There are thousands of Iraqi people who are dying so hundreds of thousands in this country can buy gas," said Sasha Wright, a 23-year-old Oakland resident who was sitting in Market Street.

"A lot of our allies are against the war," Favianna Rodriguez, 22, said as she and several dozen compatriots blocked Market and Kearny streets. "We—the people of color—and young people should be advocates for the children of Iraq."

A dozen demonstrators blocked the entrance to 45 Fremont, which houses the offices of Bechtel Corp. The company was one of several the demonstrators tried to shut down for the day.

"We have to keep these people from making money on the war," said Nate Taylor, 24, of Oakland. Asked if he thought the protest was having any effect, he said it was. "It's making a difference. People are going home."

Some demonstrators walked along Market Street and side streets, spray painting graffiti. Dozens of newsstands were overturned and dragged onto the street. But passersby soon placed the racks back on the sidewalk.

"I don't agree with everything going on in the world," said Yulee Kim, who pulled one off the street. "But let's have some peace in our existence."

Gov. Gray Davis urged California's protesters to express their views in a nonviolent manner without blocking traffic.

"Everybody has the right to protest," he said at a Los Angeles press conference. "But no one has the right to commit violent acts or interfere with others' ... rights to get on with their business and get on with their day."

Throngs outside the San Francisco federal building prompted authorities to seal entrances and exits for about an hour. Other demonstrators, some dressed as road crews, blocked traffic simply by setting out orange cones and "Men at work" signs.

"We feel that after a war starts, business in this country can't go on as usual," said Jennifer Burney, 25, who joined two to three dozen other students from Stanford University and Santa Clara University to block Third and Folsom streets.

While the sidewalks were full of demonstrators, downtown workers weaved through the crowd to reach their offices and shops. A number of trolleys and buses with Market Street routes were stranded for hours. Exasperated, drivers sat idling.

"I'm not liking it. I've got to get to work," said Clifford Turner, who was stuck in his truck at Mission and Third streets for 20 minutes.

Across the bay, 2,000 people packed Sproul Plaza at the University of California, Berkeley. Campus police arrested 117 protesters who held a peaceful sit-in inside the administration building, all of them cited for misdemeanor trespassing and released.

WHAT'S COMING

by Robert Fisk ; The Independent, London
March 21, 2003

Baghdad. In Yasser Arafat Street, at the Sana Nimr al-Ibrahim pharmacy, Riad offered to give me two rolls of bandages free. I told him I'd better pay, since I thought the RAF was going to bomb him in a few hours time. "I think they are," he said. Then he shot me the kind of grin I didn't deserve.

As a Brit, buying emergency rations in the shops of Baghdad yesterday evening was an instructive experience. Riad's pharmacy was crowded, his customers buying up not just bandages but splints, painkillers, tweezers, cotton wool, disinfectant and rubbing alcohol. It had been the same on Tuesday night, from 5 pm right up to 10 pm.

Yet in all Yasser Arafat Street, there wasn't a curse or a bad word for a Brit. I was told always that I was "welcome in Iraq"—the few journalists here must fervently hope this remains the case when the blitz begins—and that it was pleasant to see a sahafa, a journalist, taking the same risks as the people in the street. This was not, of course, the moment to remind them that I had a flak jacket when they did not, that I had a gas mask, which they have not, that I even have a helmet that would fit any of their heads but is likely to be only on mine.

At the Alastrabak grocery store, I bought 25 loo rolls, a mountain of biscuits and a stack of red and green candles. Abbas, the proprietor, told me I was his 200th customer of the evening. Usually, fewer than 100 visit his shop in an entire day.

At the Tabarak store—in English, the "God Bless You" store—I put 24 bags of crisps, boxes of long-life cheese and 30 cans of the most tasteless soft drink in the whole world on the counter. After a siege or two—the 1982 Israeli siege of Beirut was my first—you develop an uncanny knack of knowing what to hunt for.

I bought two electrical adaptors from Sami's little store for my computer leads, though they won't be any use if the Americans bomb the Iraqi power grid. Meat and vegetables of any kind are a waste of money, unless the meat is canned. And that's what Baghdad residents were buying yesterday. Dr Mohammed of the Karameh Hospital was buying razor blades, so he could shave in cold water—if there is electricity to drive the pumps.

The most popular food at one store was tamaniya, an Iraqi sweet made out of date palms, so long-lasting that it's reputed to be edible for a decade and so sticky that it can wrench out the weakest molars. Tamaniya doesn't go off in the heat.

Most of the shops in Yasser Arafat Street have already been shuttered by their owners for fear of thieves and the pavements were scattered last night with a gloomy mixture of last-minute shoppers and soldiers. A uniformed and bearded member of the Republican Guard crossed the road with his arm round his small son on a last visit home before the war.

Yet even last night, it was still difficult to grasp the reality of what was in store for us. Two old Soviet-made anti-aircraft guns sat on top of the ornamental gates of a palace, brilliantly illuminated by the floodlights below. There were piles of sandbags at street corners, the soldiers behind them chatting to shoppers. Is this what constant war does to people? Does it turn them into men and women who know they will survive for the simple reason that they survived last time?

At Baalbek Nuts I bought pistachios from the Lebanese owners, who answered my request for their thoughts on the war with the typically Lebanese response of "no problem". It's a lie, as we all knew.

After all, Dr Mohammed invited me to his hospital because we both assumed there would be civilian casualties. On Iraqi television, they were replaying this morning's theatre at the National Assembly, where parliament members dutifully chanted their undying loyalty to Saddam and routinely offered their blood and souls to the same gentleman.

The Iraqi Minister of Information had told foreign journalists earlier that this war would be "no picnic" and added that the Americans and British would be killed. Which may be true, although the Iraqis, it has to be said, were more interested last night to know how many of them would be killed by the Americans and the British.

A LETTER FROM MICHAEL MOORE TO GEORGE W. BUSH ON THE EVE OF WAR

George W. Bush
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, DC

Dear Governor Bush:

So today is what you call "the moment of truth," the day that "France and the rest of world have to show their cards on the table." I'm glad to hear that this day has finally arrived. Because, I gotta tell ya, having survived 440 days of your lying and conniving, I wasn't sure if I could take much more. So I'm glad to hear that today is Truth Day, 'cause I got a few truths I would like to share with you:

1. There is virtually NO ONE in America (talk radio nutters and Fox News aside) who is gung-ho to go to war. Trust me on this one. Walk out of the White House and onto any street in America and try to find five people who are PASSIONATE about wanting to kill Iraqis. YOU WON'T FIND THEM! Why? 'Cause NO Iraqis have ever come here and killed any of us! No Iraqi has even threatened to do that. You see, this is how we average Americans think: If a certain so-and-so is not perceived as a threat to our lives, then, believe it or not, we don't want to kill him! Funny how that works!
2. The majority of Americans—the ones who never elected you—are not fooled by your weapons of mass distraction. We know what the real issues are that affect our daily lives—and none of them begin with I or end in Q. Here's what threatens us: two and a half million jobs lost since you took office, the stock market having become a cruel joke, no one knowing if their retirement funds are going to be there, gas now costs almost two dollars—the list goes on and on. Bombing Iraq will not make any of this go away. Only you need to go away for things to improve.
3. As Bill Maher said last week, how bad do you have to suck to lose a popularity contest with Saddam Hussein? The whole world is against you, Mr. Bush. Count your fellow Americans among them.
4. The Pope has said this war is wrong, that it is a SIN. The Pope! But even worse, the Dixie Chicks have now come out against you! How bad does it have to get before you realize that you are an army of one on this war? Of course, this is a war you personally won't have to fight. Just like when you went AWOL while the poor were shipped to Vietnam in your place.
5. Of the 535 members of Congress, only ONE (Sen. Johnson of South Dakota) has an enlisted son or daughter in the armed forces! If you really want to stand up for America, please send your twin daughters over to Kuwait right now and let them don their chemical warfare suits. And let's see every member of Congress with a child of military age also sacrifice their kids for this war effort. What's that you say? You don't THINK so? Well, hey, guess what—we don't think so either!
6. Finally, we love France. Yes, they have pulled some royal screw-ups. Yes, some of them can pretty damn annoying. But have you forgotten we wouldn't even have this country known as America if it weren't for the French? That it was their help in the Revolutionary War that won it for us? That our greatest thinkers and founding fathers—Thomas Jefferson, Ben Franklin, etc.—spent many years in Paris where they refined the concepts that lead to our Declaration of Independence and our Constitution? That it was France who gave us our Statue of Liberty, a Frenchman who built the Chevrolet, and a pair of French brothers who invented the movies? And now they are doing what only a good friend can do—tell you the truth about yourself, straight, no b.s. Quit pissing on the French and thank them for getting it right for once. You know, you really should have traveled more (like once) before you took over. Your ignorance of the world has not only made you look stupid, it has painted you into a corner you can't get out of.

Well, cheer up—there IS good news. If you do go through with this war, more than likely it will be over soon because I'm guessing there aren't a lot of Iraqis willing to lay down their lives to protect Saddam Hussein. After you "win" the war, you will enjoy a huge bump in the popularity polls as everyone loves a winner—and who doesn't like to see a good ass-whoopin' every now and then (especially when it's some third world ass!). So try your best to ride this victory all the way to next year's election. Of course, that's still a long ways away, so we'll all get to have a good hardy-har-har while we watch the economy sink even further down the toilet!

But, hey, who knows—maybe you'll find Osama a few days before the election! See, start thinking like THAT! Keep hope alive! Kill Iraqis—they got our oil!!

Yours, Michael Moore
www.michaelmoore.com

O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM: HOW TO GET TO PALESTINE AND BACK

By Joe Piglet

While on our way to work on the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, my partner Liv and I saw both planes hit the WTC towers. Seeing that and smelling it and feeling it and dreaming about it made us want to understand where the hate came from that could inspire such a thing. Knowing that U.S. foreign policy sucks is very different from really experiencing it, up close, from the other side of the fence.

At the end of the following March we went to Palestine with a group called the International Solidarity Movement (ISM). We were going to plant olive trees, remove roadblocks, and help rebuild homes. Knowing very little about the situation, I was mostly going just to learn. What I did know was that the Israeli military, funded and supplied by the United States, had occupied Palestine since 1967, and that Palestinians had responded with fists and stones and periodic suicide bombings. The bombings were easy to draw a picture of in my mind, but the occupation that the Palestinians were enduring was less clear.

As chance had it, we flew to Tel Aviv, Israel the day after a major suicide bombing killed 29 Israeli civilians. At a Jerusalem border checkpoint a teenage Israeli soldier refused us entry into Palestine: "You can't go into Bethlehem," he said, clutching his M-16 and smiling grimly, "we're having a big fucking party." We got into Bethlehem through another checkpoint, and found a city preparing for lockdown. The television bristled with reports of Israeli tanks massing at the border and reserve soldiers called up to serve in a lengthy "incursion" into Palestinian land. With the Palestinian ISM organizers going into hiding, our plans for tree-planting and house-building were scuttled, and we ended up staying with a family in a nearby refugee camp.

Al Azzeh refugee camp was home to 2000 Palestinians, packed into a quarter-mile-square neighborhood. Our host family lived in a modern apartment, with cable television, pirated U.S. video games, and hot water more often than not. But the boys (Hassan, 10 and Kateb, 13) slept in a bedroom with bullet holes in the windows, bullet holes in the door, bullet holes in the framed picture of their uncle on an upper shelf. The bullet holes in the outside walls were stuffed with yellow athletic socks to protect against the cold. Our first night in Al Azzeh I heard more gunfire than I'd ever heard in my life, directed into the camp from the nearby border with Israel. Bursts of machine gun fire set off dances from the girls of the house (Jala, 16 and Adara, 20). "It is our music. Without it, we cannot sleep."

During our second day in camp we made banners with U.S. and British flags on them, telling the Israeli soldiers that internationals were in the camp, and asking them to please leave Al Azzeh in peace. While we made the banners, others in our group marched to a border town that had already been invaded. Five of the internationals were shot by Israeli soldiers, and soon French TV reporters swept into camp, pointing cameras in our faces and asking if we were prepared to die. The Palestinian kids just laughed and bickered and played soccer around the feet of the reporters.

The next morning we were awakened by sporadic bursts of gunfire, and tank treads rolling down the road outside our window. The Israelis had arrived, and we hid with our family in a windowless interior room. Bullets came into the camp throughout that day, and throughout all of our days in Al Azzeh. When we snuck to the window to peek out at the road, we saw a tank stopped in the street. Israeli soldiers sat atop it, smoking and chatting and drinking out of a steaming thermos, clearly not afraid of incoming fire. But they kept shooting into the camp, all day, every day.

With Bethlehem now swarming with Israeli tanks and soldiers, a 24-hour curfew went into effect. This meant no work, no school, no soccer in the streets for the little kids. Jala's final exams were cancelled for the second time in as many months. Everyone just stayed inside—talking, laughing nervously, watching TV, drinking sweet tea, chain-smoking. The electricity went out and the kids stayed up late with us, singing every verse of "Imagine" in candlelit Arabic accents.

One afternoon we crept through the passageways of the camp to meet Jala and Adara's grandparents. Grandpa was twenty and Grandma nine in 1948, when the state of Israel was formed. Their village was suddenly on Israeli land, and after six months of Israeli shelling and attack, the whole village packed up and fled. The U.N. shuffled them around for eighteen months before plopping them down in tents in the mudflat where Al Azzeh now stands. Jala and Adara's father was born in one of those tents, five years later. The U.N. eventually built little cinderblock bunkers for them, with no plumbing or electricity. Since then the community has worked together to build real homes and real lives for themselves. The grandparents opened a grocery store, put all their kids through college, and built themselves a beautiful house on the edge of camp. And then six months before we were there, while the WTC was being hit by airplanes, the grandparents" home was hit by an incendiary tank shell. Most of their home burned, but in one corner was left the old man's armoire, riddled with bullet holes. At the time we visited, his suits were still in the wardrobe, suits that he'd worked his whole life to have, each now destroyed by multiple punctures. In the kitchen the grandmother's cooking things still hung, holes in the frying pan, holes in the measuring cup, holes in the coffee pot.

As internationals we were able to move around more freely than the Palestinians. We held up white flags with red crosses and walked to the hospital in a tight circle around a little girl that needed a blood transfusion. We got food into some of the areas that were running short. We rode with ambulances in order to negotiate safe passage with the Israeli soldiers. One of my first runs with an ambulance was to pick up a newborn infant suffering from respiratory failure. The infant was maybe two miles from the hospital, but the driver took a lengthy and circuitous route, peeking around corners and sticking to alleyways in order to avoid clusters of Israeli tanks and soldiers. Even so, we were stopped three times, frisked and searched while lots of automatic weapons were pointed at us. The third time we ended up talking to a commanding officer. The ambulance driver explained to him that it was an emergency, but the C.O. just shook his head and gestured to his tanks and troops. "THIS is an emergency," he said. "You go back to the hospital, and you stay there, and if we see you again there will be a problem.' Most times, though, we did get through. From the ambulances I saw a city destroyed. Shattered water mains gushed into the soil, cars were mashed into scrap, lampposts were folded over like dry brittle weeds. The curbs were torn up, windows shot out, everything taken apart that could be. The Bethlehem police station lay in rubble, leveled by a missle from an F-16. One day I saw soldiers rounding up all the men from one neighborhood, young and old alike sitting on the curb, blindfolded and with hands tied behind their backs. Another day the Red Cross escorted us into downtown Bethlehem to remove the body of an elderly woman who had died of heart failure. She had been dead three days, during which her grandchildren had sat with her body in their small apartment, waiting for safe passage to the morgue.

Every single Palestinian was punished, 24 hours a day, for weeks on end, for the actions of a single member of a fringe militant group. It is the same rationale that the U.S. has used to attack Afghanistan and now Iraq, and it doesn't solve a thing.

One of our first evenings in camp I sat with an animated, red-faced eighteen-year-old named Kadin. He sifted through his nephew's collection of leftover Israeli bullets and casings, narrating for me: "This one from an M-16, this from a tank, this here from an Apache helicopter last February." He got a little pointy thing in heavy casing and held it up with a glint in his eye. "This is a dum-dum. It goes in the body and blows up into little pieces for the most possible damage." He went on to tell of his neighbor, a fifteen-year-old girl, sitting on her stoop three weeks ago when she was hit by one of these, and her stomach blown out her back. "Dum-dum is illegal by the U.N.," Kadin finished, "so why is your country selling them to the Israelis?" It was a good question.

The ISM hosts internationals in Palestine on an ongoing basis, and I cannot recommend the experience enough. I learned more from the kids in Al Azzeh than I've ever learned from a teacher or professor (and I've had some great ones). And we helped, too. Ambulances got through, and we got food to people who would otherwise have gone hungry. Palestinians got to meet Jewish and American people that weren't carrying guns or supporting the occupation. And the Israelis didn't come into Al Azzeh while we were there. Since then they have. They arrested a man that hosted one of our friends from New York. The man's family has no legal recourse to get him back or even find out what happened to him. He's just gone.

Getting to Palestine from New York cost us just over $600 roundtrip. Everyone speaks English, the food is fantastic, and it's not as hard to get over there as it might seem. The ISM's website is www.rapprochement.org, and feel free to write me for punk-friendly advice on making the trip (jpiglet@ureach.com). Israel is escalating the Palestinian conflict as the media concentrates on the U.S./Iraq situation, so many people (including Liv and I) are planning to go over during the war. There is also plenty to be done here at home. The folks at www.sustaincampaign.org are working to cut off U.S. tax aid to Israel, and groups like Jews Against the Occupation (www.jewsagainst-theoccupation.org) are working radically and creatively to get the word out about what is happening in occupied Palestine. And if you don't have a computer to visit websites, the public library does.

There's obviously a lot going on in America right now, and a lot to be done against all manner of dastardly deeds that the U.S. is inflicting domestically and abroad. Solidarity to everyone working to build good stuff, to destroy bad shit, or even just trying to have a good fucking time amidst all the bullshit. It's all part of the same revolution.

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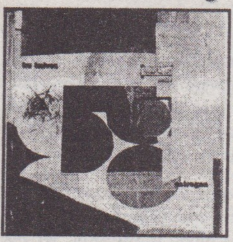

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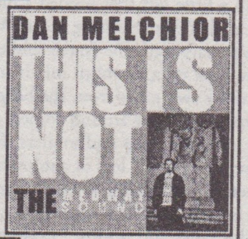

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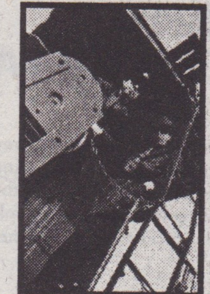

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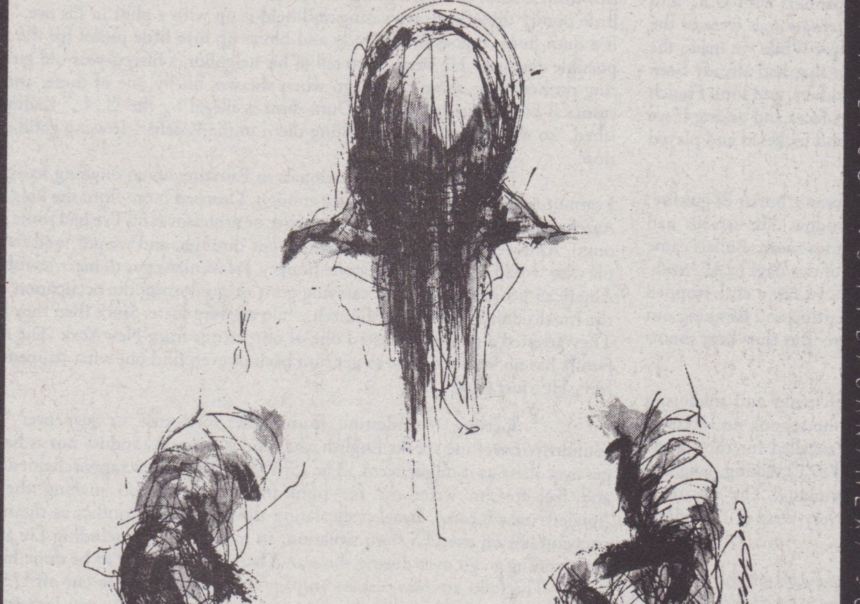

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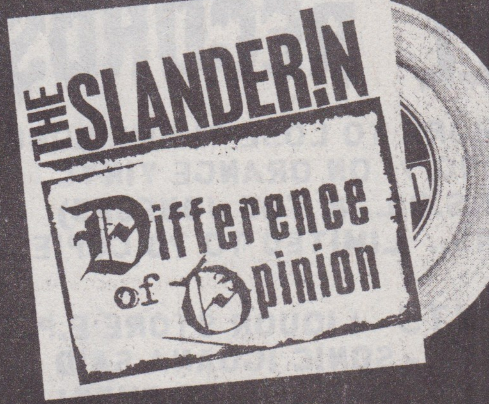

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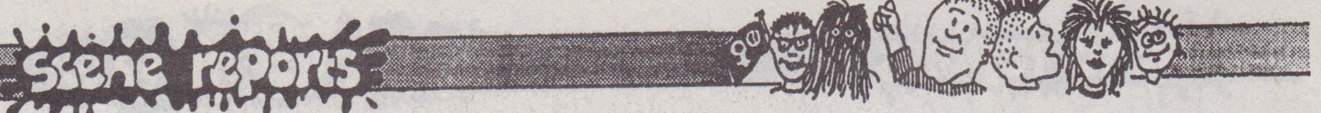
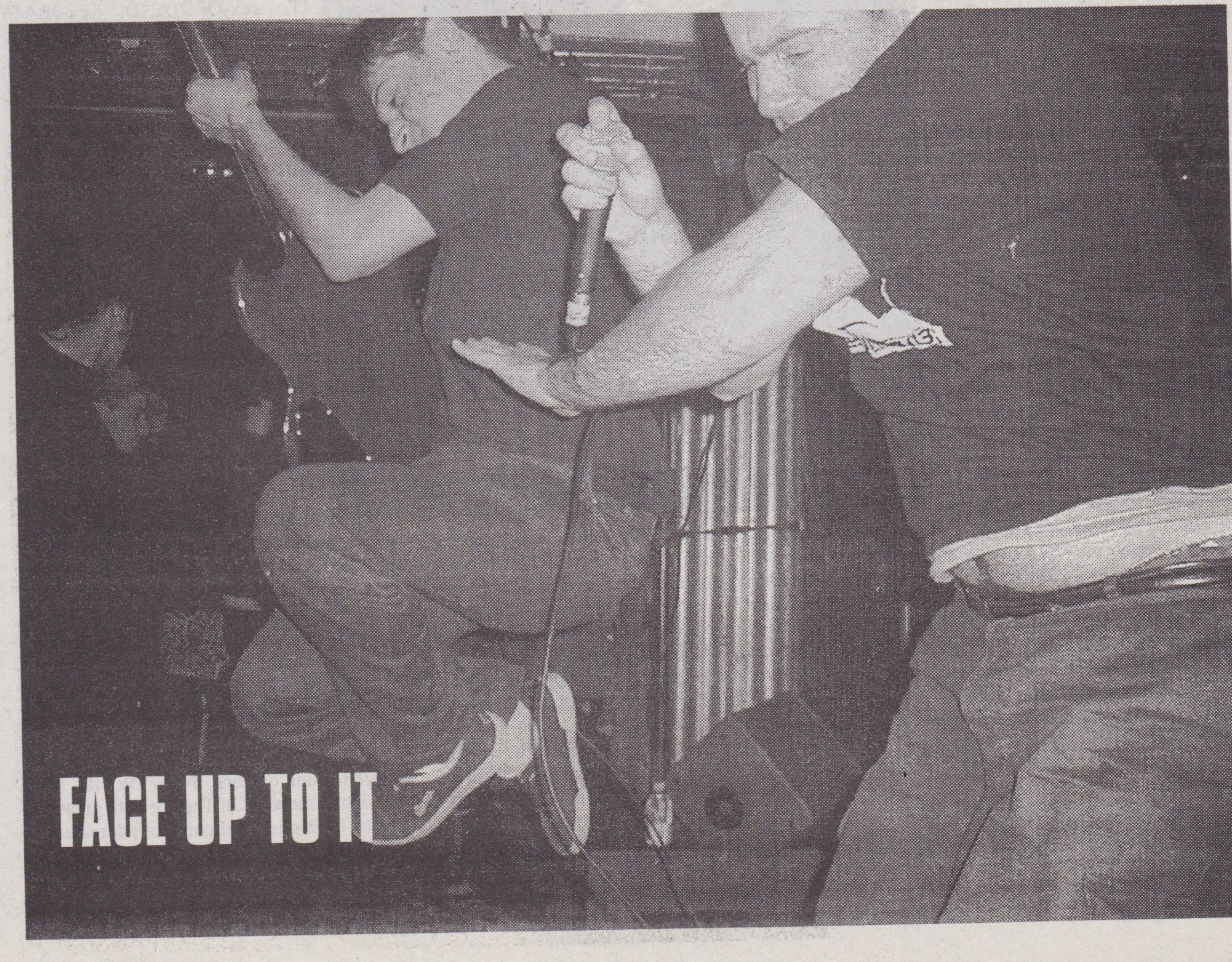


FRENCH SCENE REPORT

Bands:

In case you're not aware yet, here is a list of all the bands that split up in the last two years: KURUMA BAKUDAN (experimental HC, several records out on Bad Card), MELMOR (original powerful punk with a violin and Celtic influences, one EP out on Mass Productions), ZABRISKIE POINT (punk rock, several CDs out), ASIDE (HC crust), SOAR & SEASON (emo/metal, CD out on Stonehenge), MASS MURDERERS (punk), ÖPSTAND (thrashcore, discography CD/LP out now), JEAN SEBERG (thrashcore), EPSILON (melodic positive HC), BRIDEWELL HOSPITAL (emo-HC), REVOLUTION TIME (punk), AN ATTA (emo-HC, ex-ANOMIE), UNEVEN (HC), HEADWAY (NYHC, then... Jazz!), IRONIX (100% punk), BODA (tight melodic HC, two CDs out), NCA (punk), LIX LIVIA (crust), P 38 (oi), LES PARTISANS (redskin punk rock, several CDs and EPs out), LEGITIME DEFONCE (punk/HC), DISRUPTIVE ELEMENT (punk/HC), and INNOCENT BLOOD / MUDER ONE (NYHC/grind). Many of the individuals involved have started new bands: Ex-ALCATRAZ, ex-PEU ETRE, ex-SEASON and current HIPPIES OF TODAY members have teamed up to play melodic emo under the name AMANDA WOODWARD (one demo CD and one 10" out). Speaking of HIPPIES OF TODAY, the new French powerviolence sensation, they just put out their first CD. Some FINGERPRINT / UNDONE ex-members play in ANANDA now (metal/emo/noise, three albums out on Overcome). Some other FINGERPRINT / UNDONE members also played for a while in G-77 (heavy HC/emo a la HIS HERO IS GONE, one CD available). SCRAPS' bass player has joined members of ALGOLAGNIE to start AMIANTE, they play a mix of noise and HC (Dischord-style). RIGHT FOR LIFE play tight and fast NYHC (one LP, one mini-CD, one split EP, and one new CD just out). Some ex-members of PITFALL and BRIDWELL HOSPITAL have started a glam/punk/rock'n'roll band called SPARKLING BOMBS. They just put out their debut CD. One of them used to play in SECRETOS DEL CORAZON (melodic emo with French and German members), but I believe they have split up after putting out their mini-CD. NOTHING TO PROVE have switched from positive HC to a more modern emo/metal/HC sound and recently put out a nice digipack. They sound a bit like BURN HOLLYWOOD BURN (one CD out, featuring members of STUFF LIKE THAT and DEVICE). It seems like WHAT'S WRONG (old school HC, then emo) are back together after a two year break. KOCHISE (anarcho-punk, two LPs out) are still around and kicking, they play shows from time to time and



FACE UP TO IT

recently recorded for a new album to come out in 2003. KOCHISE's bass player still plays in CRIA CUERVOS (melodic HC, one CD and one demo out), a band started by ex-members of AHORCADOS. SUBMERGE (featuring ex-members of DISCORDE) is a heavy emo-metal band influenced by HIS HERO IS GONE, I think they have three EPs or split EPs available. ATTENTAT SONORE are the oldest-running French punk band, they have lots of EPs/tapes/comps out (the latest being a 10"). They share members with NEGATIVE I.Q. (oi-core). Actually, ATTENTAT SONORE are not the oldest French punk band, since several 80s punk rock bands recently reunited (for profit?): LES CADAVRES, OBERKAMPF, LES PORTES-MENTAUX, WARRIOR KIDS (oi)..., even KIDNAP played a reunión show. PROTEX BLUE (pop-core with ska influences) split up, but some members have already started a new band called THE MUCKRACKERS (ska-reggae). SIX PACK used to play pop-core, they put out two CDs in the mid-90s but changed their name to WEI-JI (they are more "rock" nowadays and have a mini-CD out on Sanjam). I think WEI-JI split up already, and a SIX PACK discography CD is coming out soon. DISBEER play pure discore and have a couple EPs and CDs out on Panx. STEROIDS (raw punk) have an EP out on Panx, a CD compiling their two demos, one split EP, and a full-length on Mass Productions. LYSTERIA are a female-fronted punk band, they just put out their first EP on a label started by STEROIDS members. TOXXIC TV are a band that mixes HC and punk with a lot of other influences. The result is tuneful melodic HC with reggae bits, mosh parts, and more. They underwent lineup changes but are still around, although they don't play or record anything. Ex-ASIDE members play in SHORTCUT, a fast HC band with two vocalists, their first album just came out (on my label). Ex-MURDER ONE and DISRUPTIVE ELEMENT folks re-started an old French grind/thrash band from the 80s and put out one split EP with UNHOLY GRAVE; they're called THE MAD TRASHERS. NO TIME TO LOSE are an old-school HC band with socially aware lyrics. They have several demos available, as well as one CD. Ex-UNLOGISTIC members play in H2 OIL, a melodic emo-HC band from Paris. UNLOGISTIC changed their style to minimalist straightforward/melodic HC with a drum machine. Their first LP and CD just came out on Angrr. VÖMIT FOR BREAKFAST hail from Saint Etienne, they're France's most well known powerviolence/grind act. They share members with COCHE BOMBA, who are back and still play fastcore (a discography CD is out on Bad Card). CLOUDBURST (ex-NEVER SCORNFUL) play original heavy and metallic HC with socially aware lyrics; some members play in ACRIMONIE, an emo-metal band with a DIY attitude (they have a demo CD and 10" out). THE INFORMERS, starring ex-BRIGADES vocalist Vlad, play melodic HC in the vein of MC4, with socio-political lyrics (one CD, one EP and one mini-CD). J'AURAIS VOULU play typical French punk-rock, they have one EP and one LP out on Limolife. NEVROTIC EXPLOSION (tight punk rock from Brittany) have already released one EP and one album. The ex-guitarist of MELMOR recently joined forces with them. 20" DE CHAOS play a mix of anarcho-punk and metallic crust with female vocals, they have a split LP with a greek band out on Maloka. WAITING FOR BETTER DAYS play emo, French-style; they have one mini-CD and one split 10" out (with ROMEO IS BLEEDING, who play noisy emo-metal). AGHAST are another french emo band (in the vein of early Ebullition bands), they just put out two mini-CDs. BLOCKHEADS are a long-running, powerful, not-too-metal grind-core band and have one discography CD and a bunch of split EPs out. BACCHUS TEMPLE ADDICTS feature ex-members of MASS MURDERERS and MELMOR, they play metallic punk and their first 10" is still available. LA FRACTION are a melodic punk band from Paris with awesome female vocals. Their second album came out recently. BRIGADA FLORES MAGON have two CDs out (oi). ACTION DIRECTE (oi/ska) and YA BASTA (left-wing ska) have a split EP out as well as one CD out each.

LA FRACTION

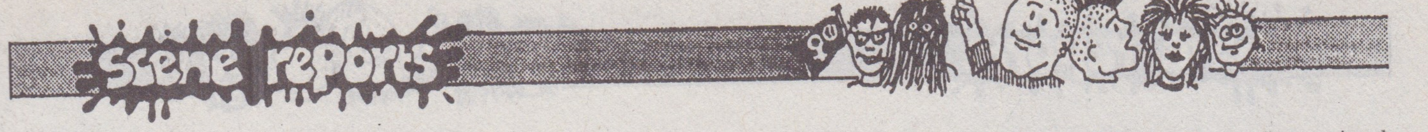
Newer bands include: RETCH (grind/thrash), TO LEARN (ex-SLAMFACE, HC/emo/metal, one CD out), SONS DE LA LUCHA (oi-ska), BOLCHOI (oi), EMBUSKADE (ska), FACE UP TO IT (ex-ÖPSTAND, ex-JEAN SEBERG; thrashcore), WEDA (fast HC with an emo touch), AFFLICTION (punk/HC), REVIVE (old-school, first mini-CD out on a German label), VALUE DRIVEN (NYHC old-school sXe, one CD out), TEKKEN (grind/noise, hundreds of tapes available), CORE Y GANG (Celtic punk), ANTIBODY (punk-HC), SICKNESS (crust), BRIGITTE BOP (punk rock), and GEORGE BITCH JUNIOR (powerviolence). That's it for bands. Of course there's more, but these are the ones which put out records. Read zines if you want info on more unknown ones.

Zines:

There are basically no zines in English around here, but I'll drop a couple names: EARQUAKE, France's biggest and most regular punk/oi/HC zine (in French—over 75 issues out). EXOTIC UNDERGROUND (EXOTICA SUBTERRANEA) is a zine dedicated to punk/HC/metal/underground scenes from countries that you didn't even know existed. I'm sure if there were a scene on Mars, Fred of EXOTIC UNDERGROUND (who also runs Darbouka RDS) would be the first to know about it. Two other zines worth checking out: WE'RE GONNA FIGHT (sXe/HC/punk/oi) and NEW WIND (old-school and metal HC). They're both great and written in English, write me for addresses!

Labels:

Panx has slowed down a lot label-wise, but he still runs one of the biggest french websites. Darbouka and Tien An Men put out records



with bands from far-off countries (China, Paraguay, Macedonia, Turkey, Myanmar, etc.). Sanjam puts out more and more poppy bands these days (Serotonin, SIX PACK, etc.). Maloka put out the ATTENTAT SONORE 10", an MDC CD, and many more records by international bands. Stonehenge put out UNDONE's, ALCATRAZ's (jazzy emo) and FINGERPRINT's discographies as well as records by AMANDA WOODWARD. Also check out Small Budget / Shark Attack (melodic HC and ska/punk mainly), Limo Life (punk rock), Revolution (HC/crust), Molaire (emo/HC/noise), Chaos City Core (crust/grind/punk), Bad Card (now called CHIMERES: HC/crust/etc.), Mass Productions (punk and garage), Murder (thrashcore), Ratbone (crust/HC/grind), Walked In Line (punk rock and HC), Rural (punk rock), and FIGHT 45 (punk).

Distros: I'll just drop a few distro names (the biggest and most reliable). Panx, Exutoire, Boisleve, Punk As Fuck, Murder, Sanjam, Overcome, Maloka, Stonehenge, Emergence, Walked In Line, New Wave, Mass Productions, Burn Out, Zoop, Kanivo Chaos, Guerilla Front, Punkahontas, El Trasgo, and Ratbone. If you want to deal with one that doesn't appear on this list, write and ask me first.

Websites:
These are the biggest and most interesting ones. From there, you can follow the links and find out about our whole scene! http://www.panx.net/, http://members.aol.com/rafdiy/, http://www.stonehengerecords.com/, http://www.multimania.com/fourdu/ (on old French bands), http://perso.club-internet.fr/mankind/, http://www.chez.com/maloka/, http://www.punk-hardcore.fr.st.

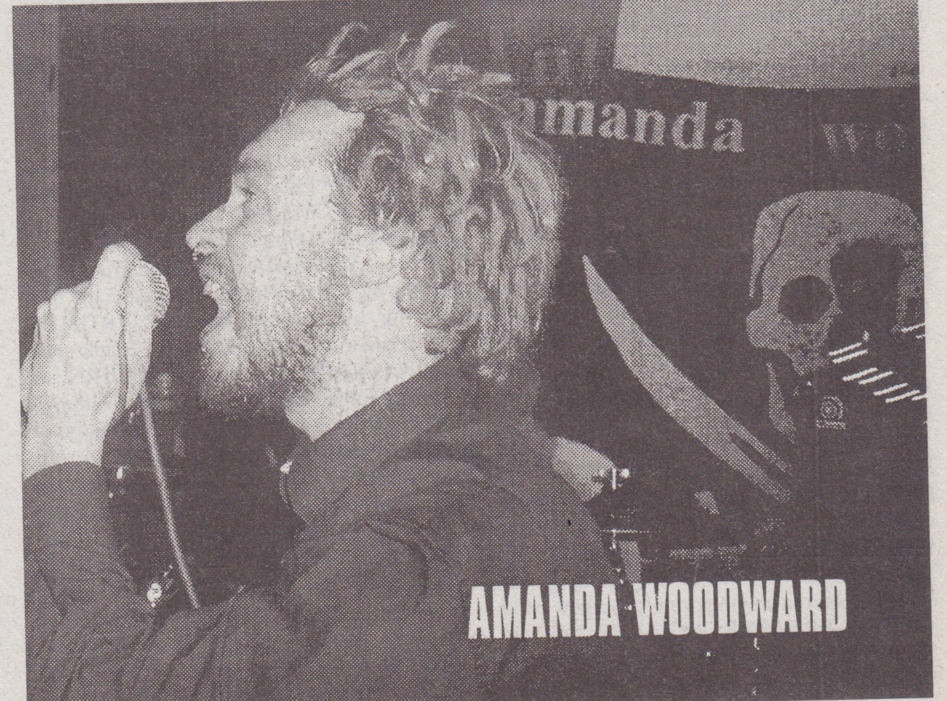
Politics:
People interested in politics, antisexism, antiracism, anticapitalism, whatever, should contact the hardest-working organization in France: Maloka, BP 536, 21014 Dijon cedex. People interested in animal rights can check out http://www.vegetarisme.org/vegasso. There are very few squats in France that are socially active, and the ones that are usually don't last long. Several of them got evicted in the summer of 2002, including some famous ones like "le squat 13" in Paris, or "le pamplemousse" in Dijon. There is a long running squat in Dijon called "Les tanneries"; they organize shows very regularly.

And now onto some personal plugs (did you really think I was doing this for free?): I have just put my first web-zine online at http://punk-hardcore.fr.st (international scene reports, interviews, reviews, photos, MP3s, etc.—send your stuff in!). Available on my label: *New Days Rising* (punk/HC compilation, 8 international bands, unreleased material by ATTENTAT SONORE, COJOBA, DDI, FRAMMENTI, AFFLUENTE, INVAZIJA, ZLODZIEJE ROWEROW, and SMUDOS), *Reconstruction* (French hardcore compilation, 26 bands from 1998, almost gone), SKEEZICKS discography CD (German classic and fun posi-core from 1987), AGENT 86 CD (US punk/HC 1985-1990, 3 vinyls on one CD), HHH double CD (classic Spanish thrashcore 1985-92), MDC CD (US HC, re-release of the two first LPs on CD), ANOMIE discography CD (French emo-HC), ASIDE/ SHORTCUT split CD (two albums, two fast Hardcore bands from France), and *Take No Heroes* (international old-school HC comp: 10 bands from 10 countries). I also run a big non-profit punk/HC/sXe/crust distro with hundreds of records from around the globe, send a stamp or mail!

For more info on French stuff and for contact addresses don't hesitate to write me. We also wish to help travelers. We can put you up, show you around, etc., but *only* punk/HC people please. New address as of September 2002:
Boisleve, La saudrais, 35310 Cintré, France.
coinxxxcoin@yahoo.fr
http://www.punk-hardcore.fr.st

Addresses:
•Earquake, Fred Leca, Le ménil, 88160 le thillot.
•Panx, BP 5058, 31033 Toulouse cedex. (infos@panx.net)
•Sanjam, Yann Dubois, 9 rue des mésanges, 35650 Le rheu. (sanjamrec@aol.com)
•El Trasgo, Le courtil, 05250 St-Etienne en Devoluy. (eltrasgo@infonie.fr)
•Darbouka and Exotic underground c/o Fréderic Brahim, 17 rue de la forêt, 67340 Menchoffen.
•Ratbone/ Scream zine, BP 11, 33023 Bordeaux Cedex. (nightbrings@yahoo.com)
•Stonehenge, b.p. 46, 33031 Bordeaux cedex. (mailorder@stonehengerecords.com)
•Kochise and more c/o padi, bp 232, 75264 paris cedex 13

Addresses in Paris:
•Sonic machine, 18 rue de la Fontaine du but, 75018 Paris (record shop)
•Le Kiosk, 21 ter rue voltaire, 75011 Paris (anarcho-punk infoshop)
•Librairie parallèles, 47 rue Saint Honoré,



AMANDA WOODWARD

75001 Paris (alternative record, book and zine shop)
•Le Silence de la rue, rue Faidherbe, 75011 Paris (record shop)
•Bad boys, rue Kléber, 75011 Paris (record shop / collector items)
•Monster melodies, 9 rue des déchargeurs, 75001 Paris (record shop)
•Plus de bruit (35 rue de la Rochefoucault, 75009 Paris (record shop)
•Librairie Publico, 145 rue Amelot, 75011 Paris (anarchist library)

Addresses in Lyon:
La gryffe, 5 rue S. Gryphe, 69007 Lyon (anarchist library)

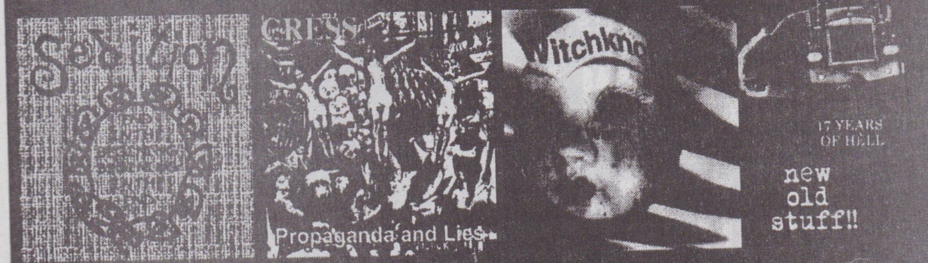
Addresses in Dijon:
Maloka, 61 rue Jeanin, 21000 Dijon (anarcho-punk collective)

Addresses in the Basque area:
•Patxoki, 23 bis rue des Tonneliers, 64100 Bayonne

The Bay Area is a buzz with quality punk right now, BORN/DEAD just recorded for a 12" that'll be out on Prank shortly, Playing total Econochrist/Christ On Parade style hardcore, they are doing a US tour this summer with Seattle's Phalanx and plan to go to Europe in the fall. DEADFALL's EP is out now and they will also be hitting the road this summer. If you are at all a fan of hardcore you want to be certan to check their raw rampaging attack out. THIS IS MY FIST's EP is a delightful pop gem—you like Discount or Ambition Mission you'll love them! SISTEMA BRUTALE's demo is something that should not be missed—total raw punk from the South Bay that sounds like Ohlo Seco at times. FUNERAL SHOCK is another new band that's been playing around alot lately, and their demo mos def smokes in a early Necros sort of way. S.H.A.T. hail from Redwood City and sound like early FYP (that's a good thing)–they recently played with L.A.'s The Orphans (who sound like the lost tracks off of *Yes, L.A.* or VKTMS younger sister) and NYC's The Shemps (featuring *MRR*'s own Bill Florio)-and wowed the rather meager crowd with their song "Oh, My God I Think I'm Going To Puke." Good Times! Sadly The West Bay's LAB RATS have splitting up, but singer Conner is playing drum's in a new band with ex-BREAKER BREAKER people called TREASON (not be confused with the band from Portland nor the band who's drummer later went on to be in Christ On Parade). BEFORE THE FALL is now back from traveling around the Southeast and are looking for a new bassist. Still haven't seen I LOVE A PARADE (featuring ex-Econochrist and His Hero Is Gone peeps) but I hear they sound like Counterblast, so that's a good thing right? STOCKHOLM SYNDROME is still the worst band in SF. ONION FLAVOURED RINGS and ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT just did a bunch of shows in the Southeast with Florida's Bitchin', rumors abound that ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT has recorded finally, but who knows for sure? I haven't seen the demo yet, have you? ONION FLAVORED RINGS power pop drenched LP is out now so keep your eyes peeled for ads! According to bassist Spencer, local emo heatthrobs The SHIVERING (who just released a 10" on Chicago's Council records) are taking a break since their guitar player Bryan is now living in Las Vegas. They recently played with emo thugs YAPHET KOTTO (who just added ex-Struggle drummer and *MRR* columnist Jose Palafox to their roster and are on tour across the USA as I write this) at Mission Records to a record crowd of people for that tiny venue. TAKARU is a new band in the roll around on the floor and throw a shit fit genre—a bit Uranus-esque if you ask me. Now if only they would turn around when they played! DEADLY WEAPONS is another new band featuring Tina from the BOBBYTEENS and Larry from the Rickets, they play quick paced snotty ass-fuck hardcore punk more akin to Larry's former projects than Tinas. Killer stuff. STRUNG UP is Bill from BORN/DEAD's other band, this time going for more of a tough Negative Approach style approach. They have an EP on Holland's Kangaroo Records that is due out anytime now. DESOLATION is Will from BORN/DEAD's other project and they play snarling metallic hardcore kinda like Nausea meets Deathside. Great, Great Great! FLESHIES new LP is due out any day now on Alternative Tentacles, and are heading to Europe soon. Rumors abound that PHANTOM LIMBS maybe calling it quits sometime soon, but they are total unconfirmed. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT is in Europe, though they haven't played in the Bay Area for like a year! We lose! ARTIMUS PYLE has a new LP due out on Prank soon and are in Europe right now. OUR TURN is a new sXe youth crew style band, maybe they'll put out a demo. Saw their first show and they definately show promise, total Judge worship. PANTY RAID is more obnoxious (I mean that in the best possible way!) than ever. Sassy snotty garagey punk that's not afraid to piss off the crusties! Haven't had a chance to see the POX yet but everyone tells me they are awesome fast studded and charged punk! CASE OF EMERGENCY hails from near the airport and play more raw fast punk with songs about war. They have an EP due out soon on Controlled by Plague Records (who also put out the DEADFALL EP). BLOWN TO BITS lost (fired? it's still unlcear) their singer Jim but have been keeping at the heavy and fast DOOM-laden hardcore. LESSER OF TWO lost their drummer, but are looking for a new one (or so a little birdy told me). STRYCHNINE is going to Europe to play the BOB Fest soon, and is shopping around for a new label. DEAD & GONE appears to be just that though Bryan has a new band in the works with Casey from YAPHET KOTTO cooking. VOETSEK have recovered from losing Tobia on guitar and now are playing regularly again, they have an EP out on Six Weeks. STFU has and EP out on Third World Records chock full of 6 tracks of pure chaotic punk fury! BRAINOIL's LP is out now on Life Is Abuse, heavy as fuck brutal groove-laden destruction can be found within. DYSTOPIA played a few gigs and seem to be back on hiatus for now. SF's F-HOLE have two great EP's of great snotty and catchy punk out though I've yet to catch them play. BOTTLES & SKULLS wish they were Social Distortion meeting up with The Supersuckers at truck stop and just released a full length. SHARP KNIFE is sorta on hiatus while their filthy singer Morgan does something (god really knows what) in Portland. Their other singer Tony (ex-DYSTROPHY) has another band called the PEELS that plays some nice Dinasour meets Husker Du style punk. NIGEL PEPPERCOCK continue to offend, shock and confuse the punks in a delighful way. Their LP is great, if for nothing else but the 70s gay porn that makes up the layout. GIANT HAYSTACKS just released a single that reminds me a bit of Zounds meets the Proletariat. SHOTWELL just left for a seven week tour of the US, and also just put out a new full length CD thanks to Plan-it-X Reocords. ROCKNROLL ADVENTURE KIDS 12" is finally out with real style covers and is reccomended. With any luck we'll see a new issue of *People Under No King* this year from Susan and Loki, it's been too long since the last one made an appearance. 625, Left Off The Dial, and Six Weeks Records all have Bay Area comp records in the works. Sadly Burnt Ramen has been forced to close it's doors to doing shows after a visit from the Richmond Fire Marshal (see John the Baker's letter in this issue). First ABCNoRio, then The Smell, now Burnt Ramen. Let's hope Gilman and Mission Records don't get swept up in this trend!

Ok, Ok, you're pissed cause you got left out, well send me your info and I'll include you in the next Bay Area scene report! I want to try to do these every other month, so send all info about your band/zine/label etc to mikethorn@maximumrocknroll.com
See ya around!

FLAT EARTH RECS



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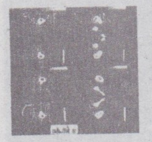

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I QUIT!

If you haven't heard of Swedish *combo magnifique* I Quit you should call 'em up and do some yelling and cursing. It's all their fault, see. As the title of their latest EP *Old, Miserable Bums* suggests, they're simply too old and miserable to build a decent musical career. That's a shame, because we're talking some pretty amazing, faster-than-you hardcore here. *MRR*'s Willie Nelson went ballistic about *Old, Miserable Bums* and ranted "Get it get it get it!" in his review. I couldn't agree more, old beardie. I Quit is idiot-savant guitars combined with tight-as-fuck drumming and vocals on crack. It's Stephen Hawking smartness with the ability to punish you good.

***MRR* went on a date with Jocke (guitar), Glenn (drums), and Ove (vocals), in Jocke's kitchen in the Stockholm suburb of Hallonbergen (which translates as Raspberry Mountain). Bass guy Marcus couldn't make it. The tape is rolling.**

Interview by Andreas Nordström

MRR: Considering the fact that you keep on nagging about how old and miserable you are, why have you chosen such a fast genre as grind?

Ove: It's not grind.

MRR: What is it then?

Glenn: We started out as a grind band, but since then we gradually moved away from that. It's kind of ridiculous to play fast music when you're old.

Ove: My original idea was to play a fast one-beat, but not grind. It's a fine line though, I guess.

Glenn: I played under the delusion that we were a grind band for many, many years.

MRR: When did you form the band?

Ove: I started the whole thing in '96. My idea was to form a japcore band. Like CFDL, you know. Then I recorded six songs with just drums and vocals and sent it to Jocke and Marcus.

Jocke: Uh huh, and then Marcus and I completed it with bass and guitar. We had just started to hang out. It was a nice way to start a friendship. I invited him over to play some basslines.

Glenn: That's a great way to formulate an ad for a lonely-hearts column. "Don't hesitate to write if you like romantic strolls in the woods, candlelit dinners, and playing some basslines."

Ove: Then I made another solo recording that Jocke went and lost on the subway.

Jocke: I held that tape in my hand for like one minute. Then it was all gone. Then Ove made another recording where it sounded as he was singing "Catch It" on one song, a song about *brännboll* [a stupid Swedish version of baseball]. Actually, we sent that first six-song demo to Sörling [legendary punk reviewer at Swedish metal magazine *Close Up*]. I think he liked it.

Ove: Yeah.

MRR: He's really old. Like 54.

Ove: Then, in '97 we got in touch with you, Glenn. I met you while you were touring with Monster [now defunct punk/soul band]. You asked if I was Ove in Purgatory Clüster, 'cause you wanted a mix tape with some grind. When I sent that tape I also enclosed some I Quit songs.

MRR: How many grind songs can you fit in on a C-90 tape?

Ove: 100, at least. But Jocke and I started talking about recruiting Glenn, and he said yes right away. Then Jocke asked "Well, what are you gonna do then?" And I said "I guess I'll just stick to the singing then."

Jocke: What was your reaction to my question?

Ove: Er, you didn't put it like that.

Jocke: No. I started out with this elaborated thing about how gifted you were as a drummer. And then I continued with an even longer theory about why you shouldn't play the drums anyhow.

Glenn: But it wasn't until '98 that we started playing as a four-piece band. And just a month before that, Marcus and I realized that we were actually playing in the same band. We found out at this afterparty at my place.

MRR: You've only played live a few times. Do you consid-

er yourself a studio band?
Glenn: If only!
Ove: We've done the same amount of concerts as recordings. We've done like four or five concerts and recordings since '96. I've lost count. Other people lose count at 45,000. I really don't know if it's four or five. That's probably a sign that you're old.
MRR: Or that you suck.
Glenn: I think we had the intention to become a studio band. At one point we just threw away the whole idea of doing concerts. It just caused too many problems. You have to carry stuff, play in front of idiots and get sweaty. It's not worth it.
MRR: What's the biggest thing that happened to you so far?
Jocke: That someone wanted to release that first EP.
Ove: But before that Johnny, who runs the label Hepatit D, promised to release that first recording, the one where I'm drumming. He said "It's cool, I just need a matching band for a split single." A year passed, and Johnny said "It's cool..." Another year passed, and so on. The thing is that I told Dadde at Busted Head Records that we already promised our recording to Johnny. So here's to you, Johnny.
Ove: I think the highlight so far was that Max at 625 released our latest single. I mean Max from Spazz, a band that I liked for ages.
Glenn: The next highlight would be to record a video, I think.
Ove: Or to rehearse. We rehearsed three times last year.
MRR: Got any ideas for a video?
Glenn: Actually, I've been planning this. You need some gross stuff. Since we're playing gross music, the video needs to upset people. My idea is that you smash a fish. A big fucking cod. You grab it by the tail and then, just like the Clash, you just smash it.
Jocke: Against some amplifiers?
Glenn: No no, just against a white background.
Jocke: I think you should press it against an amplifier to create some feedback. And then you smash it against the drum kit.
Ove: I've actually seen an I Quit video. My friend Pontus made one, in which he fucked a typewriter, but I don't remember what song it was. I think it's just me and Pontus that's seen it.
MRR: What's the nicest thing anyone has said about you?
Jocke: Frans [from Swedish band Fireside] said that one of our songs sounded like the Jesus Lizard. Now *that's* a compliment.
Ove: It's interesting when we actually try to play grind. We must have misunderstood something profoundly, and yet it turns out good.
Jocke: The weirdest thing that someone said was at the bar after a gig. A friend of mine asked "Are you for real?" That's creepy.
MRR: And then you replied by carving the answer in your arm with a razor?
Glenn: I've done that once, at a party, just because it's so stupid.
MRR: Some statement.
Glenn: No it was more like a practical joke. On myself.
MRR: If you could pick any artist or band throughout history to make a split single with, who would it be?
Glenn: I'd vote for Liberace. But on the other hand I really like the idea about this split thing that's in the making now, with I Don't Care.
Ove: Yeah. That's really cool. Japanese bands are the best. I Don't Care and I Quit on a split single. That's neat.
Jocke: It would be cool to do something with an Indonesian band. The punk scene is massive in Indonesia. And we get a lot of fan mail from Indonesia. We're huge in Indonesia.
MRR: Who's got the band's worst musical taste?
Jocke: I really think Marcus should answer that, since he is the only one who doesn't like Jethro Tull.
Ove: Anyhow, I've got the best musical taste in the band.
Glenn: But were pretty united in our musical taste.
Ove: Not at all. When we looked into this we found out that the only record that all four of us own is the first Hives LP.
Glenn: And none of us actually bought it.
Ove: And everybody had once owned "Reign in Blood."
Jocke: No no, not me.
Ove: Yeah that's right. You said that you liked it. And we settled for that.
Jocke: The problem is that I don't have any records, at all.
Glenn: But generally speaking, when you play a song it's often received with joy. We may not listen to the same music, but we share some views, I guess.
MRR: If you were to do a massive tour in the USA, what would be the theme song for that tour?
Jocke: The song that would make us stop the bus, throw ourselves in a trench, and roll around?
MRR: Yeah.
Ove: "Thick as a Brick" by Jethro Tull. We would roll around for all of its 45 minutes, while Marcus would stand watching us, smoking.
Glenn: But maybe he'll reconsider–I just gave him the album.
MRR: Glenn, why are your lyrics so bitter?
Glenn: 'Well, Ove is writing as many lyrics as I am.
Jocke: [looking at Ove] You wrote the lyrics for two songs on the latest single, right? And they're both dealing with your

We're huge in Indonesia

colleagues at work.
Ove: Yeah. They're about people who need to get a grip. But that's like the most common message in our lyrics. I usually agree with Glenn's lyrics.
Glenn: I don't know if we are that bitter. A bit cynical, yes, but generally speaking, you go around and get pissed off at things, then it's nice to have a way to moan about those issues. In your everyday life no one listens to you anyway.
MRR: What do you have to moan about? You lead a comfortable life.
Glenn: [laughs] The system? [laughs really loud]
Ove: In "Keep It Real," we moan about people who make computer animations in movies. And they really need to get a grip.
MRR: That's a new thing in your lyrics. You've turned from rather big issues to really small ones.
Glenn: We've become more personal.
MRR: You used to sing about war now you sing about the fact that you don't like golf.
Glenn: When we started out we aimed to write more '80s-orientated lyrics. You know, lyrics about war, religion, and cops. Stuff like that. But since we found a more personal expression

friend's kids instead.
MRR: They sound pretty creepy, like mean dwarves.
Glenn: It sounds a bit pitched, like the Butthole Surfers. But as long as you know it's real kids it's OK.
Ove: No fake kids were used on this album.
MRR: What animal would represent I Quit best?
[Very long pause]
Glenn: A centaur?
Ove: There are so many cool animals.
Glenn: [excited] I saw this extremely cool documentary on tapirs.
Ove: Now that's a cool animal.
Glenn: Should we settle for that?
Ove: I'm in.
Jocke: And how would a tapir be able to conquer the world? I vote for hippopotamus.
Ove: No, that's like doom metal. Like Candlemass.
Jocke: [offended] It's the worlds most dangerous animal. They can reach up to 15 miles per hour at the bottom of the river.
Ove: Big deal. They represent a serious threat to all people living at the bottom of rivers.

in our music, it reflects in the lyrics as well.
Ove: I tried to mimic japcore lyrics.
MRR: But they all sing about fruit and popcorn.
Glenn: And fish.
Ove: Perhaps. But it's all about using really simple words. Like CFDL: "I wake up. I wash tooth. I change clothes." But my lyrics seem to lack a twist at the end. Like this song about my friend Lukas. I went on and on about how annoying he was when he visited me. And then it just ended. Glenn's lyrics have a twist at the end.
MRR: Could you write positive lyrics?
Glenn: Of course.
MRR: And what would that be about?
Glenn: Nice architecture.
Jocke: Definitely.
MRR: You got some kids doing backup vocals on "*Ta Dig Samman.*"
Glenn: Yeah, that's a funny story. We were recording, and the studio was located in the basement of a school. We talked about how cool it would sound to have a bunch of kids singing on "*Ta Dig Samman.*" While we were up for a smoke, we spotted some kids who were playing in the schoolyard with their mother. Then we discussed for a long time who should ask them. And finally decided that I should do it. So I walked up to the kids and asked them if they wanted to follow me down into the basement and sing. Their mother said no, then we used a

MRR: Can we agree on tapir then?
Glenn: It's good, but yet kind of hard to motivate.
Ove: Tortoise? They get really old. But that's more like a Saint Vitus animal.
Glenn: Oh, you mean we are more of a hummingbird band?
Jocke: But I saw this documentary on sparrow hawks the other day. Their feathers look like a fur made of leopard skin. Isn't that the coolest? A flying leopard.
Glenn: So, should we settle for a cross between a tapir and a sparrow hawk? A big fucking tapir with wings and leopard pants.
Jocke: A tapir hawk, that's us.
Ove: You can call us Tupac.
MRR: And what's in the future for I Quit?
Ove: We really need to rehearse.
Jocke: Writing songs.
Glenn: Yes. We got an offer from 625 to release a full-length album, which of course is a totally impossible mission. But it's worth a try.
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THE APERS

BY
LUCKY ROTTERDAM

IN HOLLAND THEY TRULY ARE PUNK ROCK KINGS AND INSPIRED TONS OF TEENAGE KIDS TO FORM THEIR OWN BANDS. I MEET UP WITH SINGER/BASS PLAYER KEVIN APER AND GUITAR PLAYER MARIEN NICOTINE IN ROTTERDAM'S EXCESS STUDIO, WHILE THEY ARE RECORDING THE FINAL PARTS FOR THEIR NEW FULL-LENGTH, THE BUZZ ELECTRIC. THE RECORD WILL BE RELEASED ON FEBRUARY 20TH AND SOON AFTER THAT THE APERS WILL HEAD OFF FOR A US TOUR. TIME TO GET THE LOWDOWN ON THE FOURSOME, BUT JERRY IS OFF TO A LOCAL SHOW FROM THE B-SHARPS AND DRUMMER IVO BACKBREAKER IS FASHIONABLY LATE. SO KEVIN, MARIEN AND I GO TO KEVIN'S PLACE NEAR THE HEART OF ROTTERDAM TO DRINK BEER AND TALK SHIT.

ROTTERDAM PUNK ROCK KINGS

MRR: The story goes that you guys decided to start the Apers at a Ramones show.

KEVIN: That's not completely true. We started at the end of '95 with the sole purpose to rock. In January '96, the three of us and Stefan Stardumb went to the Ramones show. We really wanted to go there, 'cause the Ramones were one of the reasons why we started this band. Maybe not the reason, but we really wanted to do something in the same style as the Ramones.

MRR: When you started out, there wasn't really a punk rock scene in Holland.

KEVIN: No, there wasn't a big scene. In the mid-90s the Epitaph and Fat Wreck Chords bands were pretty big. I Against I and Undeclinable were signed by Epitaph and most of the Dutch bands were trying to sound like Bad Religion and Pennywise. We wanted a different band than the Epitaph-sounding bands. We listened to Ramones and Lookout! sounding bands and later we got more influenced by older punk rock bands. For me personally bands like Stiff Little Fingers and Undertones have been really important. We did some crazy stuff when we started out 'cause there were no examples for us to look at in Holland. At that time we were the only band playing this music. We also did Dead Boys and Undertones covers. We just tried stuff, like releasing a split 7" with a hip hop band, give the 7" away for free at a release party, and wear Hawaiian shirts on stage. We didn't invent the wheel, but sort of brought it back to Holland. We didn't plan on doing it, but it happened. I think what got us so far in the last seven years, in Holland at least, is that we got our own image here. It's too easy to say that we're a Ramones clone or whatever. We've got some of the same energy and song structures, but we're a completely different band. Just like if you'd say that the Queers or Screeching Weasel ripped off the Ramones, I'd think you're a fucking idiot. That would be like saying Nelly is trying to rip off Marvin Gaye. Of course they have some elements in there but that goes for everything. It's evolution, that's how it works.

MRR: Why did it take you five years before the first full-length came out?

MARIEN: It's not like we didn't do anything before that. We released a lot of songs on split releases, compilations, EPs, and singles. I don't even know why we didn't put out a full-length earlier on, but I like it this way. We did everything: The tape, the vinyl, the singles, the EP, more singles. It's something good to look back at and say: "We did that and that's cool." Now we're releasing the second full-length pretty soon after the first one, so we're on a good schedule.

KEVIN: The thing is, we worked hard, played a lot of shows and put out stuff. The base we have built over the years is really solid now. If something shitty will happen to us now, no one's gonna tell us we didn't work for it. Whatever happens now, we got the shit to back it up. We got stuff to prove what we did. We started out when we were pretty young. Coming from Holland, not knowing what the plan was gonna be, not knowing anything about releasing records or putting up tours. We learned all that over the last few years. I think that's a good point of the Apers. We know what we did, we know what we can do and we know what we know. I think that will help us to get further every time. Now you get bands over here who think "Hey, let's do what the Apers do" without working for it. They're like "We've been practicing four times, we'll record the songs and then we can play the big festivals." It doesn't work like that, although for some bands it happens faster than for other bands.

MRR: Like for Di-rect, the Dutch band that was put together by business people and after a big ass promotional campaign now scores hit after hit in Holland with fake punk rock. What's your opinion on prefab punk rock boybands like that?

KEVIN: If it works, it works. If they play a few good songs and the kids like it, they will buy it. No one ever offered us anything like that. We never had offers from labels or booking agencies and stuff. We always had to do it ourselves. That goes for most of the bands that I know. Nine out of ten times bands that do it themselves in the beginning are stronger over the years. Some bands that are put together with good musicians will peak. If they have a few good songs, a good live presentation and view of things and are helped by people that know the business, then they can go far and have a hit record. For me playing in a band is doing what I believe in and having a lot of fun doing it. Over the years we've met so many cool people and saw so many places. As long as that keeps growing the prospects are good. No reason to change that. You always want more!

MRR: About doing it yourself, you and Stefan also founded Stardumb Records. Sometimes it's referred to as the Apers' record label, but that's not the case.

KEVIN: No, it isn't, but the Apers are a special band for the label 'cause I'm in the Apers and involved with Stardumb. Plus the fact that Stefan is, in a way, a fifth band member. When it comes to making plans, organization, designing artwork, the website... He's not playing in the band or writing songs, but for the rest he's so involved with us. But it works both ways. Stardumb also uses the Apers to try out new stuff to see how it works, like the first release, the first split 7," the first video, and if the Apers need stickers Stardumb makes 'em.

MRR: Now you're talking about a fifth bandmember, but you started out as a threepiece. Why did Jerry Hormone become the fourth Aper?

MARIEN: We went on tour with The Retarded and heard they were gonna go as a fourpiece. We didn't wanna get blown away every night so we decided to take a little kid with us on tour, and that was Jerry! That's how he came along. He's a nice guy and we can laugh with him and laugh about him.

KEVIN: Over two years ago we did four shows with Chixdiggit to try him out. After that he came along to Italy and it worked out great. It's a cool addition to our live show. I don't think we've seen anything like him on stage in Holland over the last few years. I like being with him on stage too. In the beginning, Jerry's other band, the Ragin' Hormones, was his main thing, so he skipped some Apers shows when he had to play with the Hormones. But they never took off because those guys are fuckin' lazy. Now the Hormones don't even exist anymore. They blame it on the fact that each member also is in another band, but if they really wanted to they could have organized it.

MRR: Except for Jerry joining the band, you've had the same line-up over all these years. How do you keep it together?

MARIEN: By being good friends, I guess. I've known Kevin for fifteen years now. I met Ivo the first time we practiced but that was like shaking hands, start playing and it clicked. He's a great guy too. I think it's the love that unites us. It's sort of a chemistry. We are all different characters but it fits.

KEVIN: And it's always the fun. If we go on tour now we're always talking about stuff we did before. Every year we see so many cool places and meet so many cool people—those experiences also bind us. We've been playing with The Retarded and the Backwood Creatures for a few years now, and they became friends as well. It's always us meeting other people and that brings us closer together. We played almost 400 shows and had so much fun together. The last seven years I've seen those guys more than my family and all the girlfriends that I had... all four of them, hahaha!

MRR: You also released a tape, which later was released as a 7," called Faster, It's Alright. That sounds different, more raw than your other stuff. What's the story behind that?"

MARIEN: That was not my plan actually. Kevin wrote a couple of fast songs and I had two fast songs as well and we decided to put them out. Maybe to show we could do some different stuff too, like really raw garage kinda punk rock. It's not my favorite release. Sometimes when we're in a good mood we still play those songs live.

KEVIN: When people are drunk and asking for it and we are drunk too, we'll play it!

MARIEN: But Jerry can't play all the songs.

KEVIN: We recorded it in '97 and didn't really know what we were doing. We released it as a tape because we didn't have he money to put it out on vinyl. When Stefan and I started Stardumb Records we needed a first release anyway, so it finally came out as a 7" in April 2000, just before our first European tour.

MRR: You mentioned that Jerry can't play all the songs from that 7," but apart from that, can you play any song the audience asks for, like the Groovie Ghoulies do?

MARIEN: When we were a threesome that was always possible. Now with Jerry it's limited to the newer stuff and the old favorites. But it's getting better, he's learning more and more songs.

KEVIN: I remember back in '98, we realized we had already recorded fifty songs. I think now we're coming close to a hundrerd, including the cover tunes. We just recorded five cover songs: Buddy Holly's "Oh Boy," "I Saw Her Standing There" from The Beatles, "Hey Suburbia" from Screeching Weasel, "So You Wanna Be A Rock 'n' Roll Star" from the Byrds and "Then I Kissed Her" from The Crystals/Phil Spector/Beach Boys. We do the Beach Boys version.

MARIEN: That Byrds song was a lot tougher to play than I expected it to be. I don't know what we're gonna do with the recording, but it was fun to do. I like a lot of sixties beat, but I don't know if it comes out in the songs I write. Maybe some Kinks and The Who stuff. The songs I wrote for the new record are a bit influenced by The Who.

KEVIN: A lot of bands have influenced us. If it's good rock 'n' roll we'll probably like it. Even though our taste differs. I'm not a big fan of Thin Lizzy, like Marien, but I think the Kinks are really good and some songs from the Byrds too. And I think the Beatles are brilliant. If it's a good song and it rocks, then I have to admit that I like it. I will not always say it out loud, but I think some Jimmy Eat World songs are pretty good too.

MRR: So how come you wrote a song called "Too Many Backpacks At The Show"?

KEVIN: That's about the attitude, it has nothing to do with the music. A good band is a good band, but sometimes people fuck up a scene by acting like total dicks. Over the last ten years in Holland I've seen so many people come and go with the trends. Maybe I followed some stuff too, 'cause you always get in touch with new stuff and if you like it, you jump on it. I never was a big Social Distortion fan until three years ago when Stefan told me that I really had to listen to it. Now I think it's one of the best bands out there. So you can change your mind about music, but some scenes, like the emo and the straight edge scene, why do those people bother? Just do your own thing. I'm not harassing anybody with my music or telling them what to do or what to wear. The song "Too Many Backpacks At The Show" is just for fun, 'cause you see it happen at shows. That whole emo thing is not my cup of tea and I don't want to listen to it. The last song from Jimmy Eat World is not even an emo song to me, it's just a pop song on TV. I don't hate that band, but many people see them as a main example of an emo band, so that's why I used them in the song.

MRR: Do you think some of the kids that see that emo shit on TV could wind up in the punk rock scene when they start to dig a little deeper?

KEVIN: Yeah, could be. I didn't start out listening to Ramones and Screeching Weasel right away either. In the beginning I was listening to Dead Kennedy's, NOFX, and Sex Pistols. And Nirvana also brought a lot of kids into the scene. When Nevermind came out I was 15 so, I caught up on that too. It was the first real rock that was on TV for a long time. Before that it was mostly crap like the Simple Minds. Nirvana is punk rock, in a way.

MRR: So what's your opinion about those pop bands with a punk flavor that you see on TV all the time?

KEVIN: I think Enema Of The State from Blink 182 is a good record. I don't really care that much about the discussion on if it's punk rock or not. A good song is a good song. Some of my favorites include Abba and John Denver. They wrote good songs but nobody will say that's punk rock.

MRR: Is that why you're such a big Oasis fan?

KEVIN: Oasis is a punk rock band! If the Sex Pistols were a punk rock band, Oasis has to be one too! There's not a lot of difference between them. Funny accents, same fuckin' island...

MRR: In 2000 you released a split 7" with the Travoltas. It seems like the Apers and the Travoltas are top of the pop punk heap in Holland.

KEVIN: Yeah, definitely. There's not a big pop punk scene in Holland. There is a good one though, with a lot of new, young bands that are trying, people that put up shows, and people showing interest. The good thing about us is that we don't just focus on the pop punk scene.

We're a punk rock band. Sometimes we play at a birthday party for free beer or
drive to Germany for 50 euros to play a show with the Yum Yums, but we also play
big festivals and big clubs. We play with all the bands. The shitty thing about some
scenes is that it just stays in the scene. That's also the fucked up thing about the
pop punk scene, that in a way some people start claiming it for themselves. Like "It's
our thing and nobody can touch it, nobody can listen to it, this is our poppunk scene."
That's fucked up for the scene 'cause it doesn't get any bigger than that. If it's 500
kids worldwide, then bands can't grow, tour and come to places where normally bands
don't even come. I look at the band as a punk rock band, or maybe even as a rock
band. Not just as a pop punk band. Pop punk is what we do and I love playing with pop
punk bands, but sometimes you get fucking sick and tired of it. Then it's really cool to
play with a hardcore band or an AC/DC sounding band.

MRR: So you did a short tour with the hellraising Dutch rockers Peter Pan Speedrock.
Before the tour you were somewhat hesitant 'cause they draw a completely different
audience and you said: We're not that much of a "big guy sideburns rock band."

KEVIN: It was fucking great! It turned out we were the craziest! When we started that tour
I thought "Fuck, we're going on tour with a bunch of madmen." But that's just the story peo-
ple make about those bands, 'cause if you talk to the guys from Peter Pan Speedrock, they're
the friendliest guys you could meet. It's an image people build around them.

MRR: You also played a couple of shows with Jughead from Screeching Weasel. How did
that come about?

KEVIN: Just after the last break-up from Screeching Weasel he posted on their website
that he was coming to Europe and that people should get in touch with him to have a drink
or something. So I sent him an email saying that if he'd wanna stop by in Rotterdam, he
could stay in my house if he wanted, and we could have a good time. He sent an email back
saying when he was gonna come and when he would arrive at Central Station. So I picked
him up there and we started talking about the Apers. We had a band practice the next day
and he asked if he could play some songs with us. We thought it was cool so he rehearsed
with us. Then he found out we had two shows that week, so he came along and played four
or five songs on both nights, also some Screeching Weasel covers. We also took him for a
trip to the countryside to show the windmills here in Holland!

MRR: And about three years ago, when the Queers toured Europe, you almost became a tour-
ing member.

KEVIN: That's a fucked up story man. . .

MRR: That's why we want to hear it!

KEVIN: It's not really that interesting. Joe called me and asked if I wanted to play with them
on the European tour. Of course I was really excited. I'm not a good guitar player so I started
practicing everyday, playing all the Queers songs. I could already play fifteen songs when Joe
said they decided to go as a three-piece anyway. That's the
story, no big scandals or something. It would have been
cool, though. . .

MRR: Still the scene in Europe is growing and getting more
recognition. Screeching Weasel did a Manges cover and
Groovie Ghoulies did their version of "Cause You Don't Know
Me" from the Peawees. The Peawees told me that an
American band covering their songs feels like turning things
around, like an American teaching an Italian how to make a
pizza...

KEVIN: I don't know anything about making pizza, but
it's cool for those bands! I don't see anyone covering
one of our songs in the near future... But in the last two
years only a few really good pop punk releases came
from the US In Europe there was a total blast of bands
like Retarded and Sonic Dolls putting out really good
records. People everywhere finally started looking for
stuff that comes out of Europe.

MRR: Mark Enoch from Knock Knock Records
released an acoustic record from A Radio With Guts
and also approached you to do some acoustic stuff.
Is that gonna happen?

MARIEN: We gotta write some slow tunes first!
We did an acoustic live performance for Dutch radio
once and that was horrible. I even broke a string.

KEVIN: It sounds to me like a pretty cool thing
to do but now we don't have time for it and no
good songs. If we're gonna do it we should take
the time for it and do it good. We shouldn't just sit down and
play the songs we have without a distortion on it.

MRR: Do you fight about what music is on in the van?

KEVIN: We fight about everything, but that's good! It goes to show that we're all equals. We can fight.
No one is just accepting things from the other one because he has a higher status or something. We're
just four or five people on tour and everybody has their say. Then it's about who screams the loudest.

MARIEN: So we do fight about what music goes on in the van. The one who's driving gets first
choice. Jerry and me ain't got a driver's license so we're always fucked!

KEVIN: That's fucking bullshit man! We don't bring the extremes into the van. I don't bring Abba
into the van. Marino is a big David Bowie fan and after two or three songs of that we put in the
Queers again hahaha! Everybody can sing along to that and we do it every time.

MRR: So that's gonna be a lot of singing along during the upcoming US, tour...

KEVIN: Yeah, we're looking forward to that. It's the first time we play in the US Starting March
14th till the 22nd of April, a coast to coast tour. The booker of the Groovie Ghoulies booked the
whole tour and we're going along as the regular support. It should be a lot of fun. I've been to the
US a couple of times on vacation and for the last 20 years, it's still the country where the punk
rock is from. I like a lot of European bands, but most of my favorite bands are from the U.S. The
Groovie Ghoulies are one of 'em, so it's a real good opportunity and a great honour to tour a conti-
nent like that with a good band. We could've done two or three weeks, but we have to pay for the
plane tickets anyway, so why not stay for the whole deal and try to play as much shows as possi-
ble? I don't understand why a band would go to the US for just two weeks. It's gonna cost you
more if you stay longer, but you also get to play for more people. I think that's the problem for a
lot of Dutch and European bands. They focus too much on their own country and their own conti-
nent. But it's harder to play in Poland for instance, than in the US The US is way more accessi-
ble for Western European countries than Eastern Europe. I don't see how we could put up shit in
Russia or Turkey, even though we could go there by car. Those countries are much further away
from our world than the US We're more in touch with the US You understand the language, you
know a lot about the country. Jerry and Ivo have never been to the US but the moment they
come there they will fit in. I also hope we're gonna play Gilman Street. I'm not gonna be all
sentimental and stuff, but a lot of bands I like played there. If I had to choose between CBGB's
and Gilman Street it would be Gilman Street.

(By the time the interview is almost over drummer Ivo comes in at Kevin's place and a typical
Apers discussion unfolds:)

Kevin: Were we supposed to meet up here?

MARIEN: No, we were supposed to meet in the studio at 8!

IVO: I thought we were supposed to meet at Kevin's house at 10...

*(But after everyone cracks open another beer there's no reason left to fight.
That's the punk rock spirit that will take 'em across the US without killing each other.)*

HEADLESS HORSEMEN

The first time I saw Headless Horsemen, I just went along because a few of my friends suggested they rocked out last time they saw them. I didn't really expect much, but boy was I wrong. Kids were jumping from cupboards, circle pits, sing-alongs, just total craziness—I was stoked. Not too many people out of Australia would have the privilege of experiencing their live act, but with a new 7" almost out, I am sure t hey won't disappoint. I rang up Shortty (singer), and jumped down his throat for an interview. Chris Shortt: vocals, Damien Suplina: guitar, David Seet: bass, Alex Wood: drums. Interview by Luke. Photos by Tristan Still.

MRR: Why did Headless Horsemen begin and why do you put so much energy and time into the band?

It was spawned, like many other bands, out of sheer boredom and perhaps a little frustration. Damien got the whole thing together, after the demise of Westleigh's finest ever Jap-core outfit, Meataxe. He wanted to start another fast thrash-influenced hardcore punk band. He quickly drafted in Deano on drums—he was/is the biggest band slut in Sydney. (I think he just joined six more bands last week.) A few other members floated in and out before Dave and I entered the picture on bass and vocals respectively. Are we really putting in that much effort!? Haha. I guess we try to break away from that half-arsed mindset that might have plagued us in the past with some of our previous bands. Like look at Dave's old band, Nintendo Police—they were fucking great and one of my favorites, but their release finally came out one and a half years after they had broken up. They were all totally different people by then—it was kinda like "too little, too late." To me that was a real shame. Please understand—this is no disrespect to NP or whoever was involved with that release. I'm really glad at least that it has been documented forever now. My take on things is, while you have the motivation to create something (i.e. a band), given that you have the time, energy and the resources, you should give it your best, ya' know? Yuck that just sounded like a Birdseye commercial!!

MRR: What have been the most rewarding experiences of playing in HXH and being involved in hardcore?

What's rewarding for me is the simple act of creating something. Just writing songs and playing them. It's something nobody else can touch because they're ours. Whatever type of artist you are: be it musician, writer, painter, or whatever, the basic act of self expression is universal and is one of the best things we can do as human beings. Who knows, it could give you something to live for!? As much as hardcore gives me the shits sometimes, I suppose it's been beneficial in providing a DIY community for like-minded people to network, exchange ideas, make friends, etc.

MRR: How do you like to describe the HXH sound, and attitude?

When we started, it was more straight-down-the-line thrash. But after only a little while (perhaps only a matter of weeks) a trashy rock influence crept its way in. This fluctuation of sound became quite prominent until it really defined us as a band. Don't get me wrong, we are still fast and pissed off, though. I guess we have some of that "fuck you" attitude going on, because we are a punk band and all. But also we try not to be overly serious—we want this band to promote letting yourself go and having a good time. I think our attitude is pretty honest, with as little pretentiousness as possible.

MRR: You guys have a done a lot in a relatively short span of time. Especially compared to your previous bands. What's the rush?

I partly answered this in the first answer. I guess the reason why we have seemingly been doing things so urgently is because we don't know how long we will realistically be around for. We will know when it's the right time to finish up. I don't want to pursue this if my heart isn't totally into it. It just wouldn't be right. I've always said that I'd prefer not to whore this band even an inch. There's too many bands that have already done that, they could have broken up gracefully but instead decided to flog the dead horse for all it's worth while simultaneously dragging their sorry arses through the dirt. That ain't gonna happen to HXH.

MRR: While you all obviously have different beliefs and lives, is there any thoughts that you feel the whole band shares?

We are just four average guys, who are, as you said, all totally different from each other. I think there are a few traits that we all have in common, though. We all have a great distaste for mindless fashion and the morons that are slaves to it, no matter what scene they are from. Fuck you to all the hollow nerds who define themselves by what they are wearing!

We all appreciate unpretentious people who are honest enough to be themselves without needing to be backed up by some sort of clique or label. Hopefully I'm answering for everyone and not just relaying my own thoughts. Sorry, Luke, I can't answer for the others any more than that.

MRR: How does a HXH song come together, and which song is your favorite?

The songwriting mechanics of Headless usually go something like this: Damien or Dave comes up with a riff or idea for a song, and then Deano adds the influence of his trademark beats into the fold. Later on I add my words, or sometimes Dave does too. It's not all that interesting or anything. My favorite song right now is a brand new (not nu!) one called "Think Globally, Act Locally" because it's still fresh and I dig the chorus and I'm pretty happy with the lyrics.

MRR: What do you think of split 7" and the old songs now, compared to your newer stuff?

Umm well, maybe the newer ones are slightly rockier. I dunno. Our songwriting is still all over the place, with some flat-out thrash, some trashy punk rock, and some songs that are almost youth crew sounding. Every now and then we like to throw in something with a bit more melody too. I'd like to think that we are getting better and more proficient in writing songs these days. But who knows? The older songs still mean something to me and I'm not totally bored of playing them yet, so hey!

MRR: Tell us about your recording plans and hopes.

Well we are recording thirteen new songs and rerecording two old ones in November at Aphek Studios, which is now located on the central coast. There will be some surprise guest vocals on one of the songs. This is something I'm totally excited about but I won't delve any further. With this latest musical offering we are hoping to release a brand new full 7" and also put out a CD discography of everything we've done so far. That will have about 25 songs on it.

MRR: You guys are heading to Europe now on a tour this summer (winter in Europe). Obviously, more money/success-minded hardcore people would say there's no use in a band that is relatively unknown outside of Australia attempting such a thing. What are your intentions in doing this tour and what do you hope to achieve with it?

We realize that we are almost totally an unknown band in Europe, so it's pretty obvious that financial reward is not the reason we are gonna play shows over there. The opportunity came up and we just couldn't knock it back. We see it as a challenge and possibly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I guess our intentions as a band on the tour are of course to play shows (i.e. the ability to rock the fuck out on another continent!), but equally important is the chance to hook up, link up, and network with people on the other side of the world. I've already been talking to a few people and I'm very excited to be making all these new friends, people who are willing to invite us stay at their houses after only contact via email. It's so fucking cool! I'd like to think that we could possibly pave a path for other Australian bands looking to go over there. I'm not saying we are the first ones by any means, (Brain Resin, No Grace, and Godnose have all been over there in recent years), but I do think on a whole Australian bands have been largely excluded from the international scene. Especially in DIY touring circles. I think some of the blame must be put on the imperialist nature of a lot US hardcore, which tends to ignore most of the goings-on outside of its borders except for some of the "trendy" countries in Europe and Japan. I guess our isolation doesn't help either, but if passion and honesty has anything to do with it, then we have some bands that can match it with the best of them. Aside from the band touring part of the trip, on a personal level we wanna see the world, enlighten ourselves, open our eyes, taste the sweet and unfamiliar flavors of other cultures and all that jazz. I turned 22 last week and the furthest I've been away from Sydney is Melbourne or Brisbane, so this is a massive thing for me.

MRR: How important is the community aspect of punk rock and hardcore, in your opinion? And do you feel that money and businesslike intentions conflict with this?

I guess the community aspect of hardcore punk is the central component that separates it from the mainstream. It consists of a bunch of dedicated people whose intentions are to get involved for their love of music and to provide an alternative to the crap that beams into our living rooms everyday, without the thought of any financial reward. That is the essence of it and that in itself is quite a political thing. The community obviously forms the foundations for everything else that is spawned from it; bands, shows, releases, networking, literature, or whatever. Ideally, this is how hardcore punk should operate, collectively. In reality we have all seen the well traveled road which many so-called punk and hardcore bands have ventured, losing all of their dignity (maybe they had none to begin with) along the way after being seduced by the dollar sign.

I guess it is inevitable, but people whose only intentions in punk and hardcore are to use it as a means for profiteering are obviously contradicting the whole purpose of the movement. I don't give a shit if you are some rock band who is making millions while sporting some corporate banners in the background, but please don't call yourself punk. It's embarrassing!

MRR: Say anything and everything here:

Thanks for the interview Luke, it was fun to do. If anyone wants to get in touch with me for any reason, please write to:

Chris Shortt, PO Box 871 Stives, NSW 2075, Australia

or email: gutlessrecords@hotmail.com

check out Headless Horsemen website for all European tour dates at:

www.geocities.com/headlessxhorsemen

Lesser of Two

Interview by Jake Filth.

MRR: If you had to define yourselves would you be a punk rock band?

Kelly: I think so.

MRR: What does that mean to you?

Kelly: A punk rock band, to me, refers to ethics within the band, and goals that the band has; being a totally independent band pretty much defines punk rock ethics; and just living independently.

MRR: So does it relate to ideas like anarchy and communism and shit like that?

Kelly: Yeah, I guess so. Anti-authoritarian definitely, but punk rock in and of itself isn't that important. That's not how we define ourselves, but I would say that I consider myself a fringe element of that nature definitely.

Moses: I just like to play music.

Kelly: Dude, you're just fucking (unintelligible)...Fugazi. You can't do that.

Moses: No, I'm just kidding.

MRR: I know there's been different line-ups, but you guys have been around for 12 years. Right?

Dominik: We have many clones of Steve.

MRR: But a long time.

Moses: Steve started the band in the early 60s.

Steve: It's been a convoluted path of 12 years. I joined the band 12 years ago. Kelly joined the band...how many years ago?

Kelly: Like seven years ago.

Steve: Moses joined the band...

Moses: Two years ago.

MRR: How long have you been roadying for the band, Dominik?

Dominik: I don't roadie for no goddamn band.

MRR: C'mon, how long have you been the artist?

Steve: Actually Dominik has been in the band for 16 years.

Dominik: Since 95.

MRR: That's how I prefer to put it actually, you've been in the band.

Moses: Yeah, he's in the band, for real.

MRR: So you've been touring for a while.

Kelly: Yeah we've toured a lot. We've toured the states, I think this summer was the fifth tour of the United States.

Steve: No, we've toured more than that. Maybe this is *your* fifth tour.

Kelly: ...only the second real extensive one. We toured Europe for three months. We toured Mexico for a month. I'm going to go down to Central America this winter and I've expressed interest in touring down there.

MRR: Talk about the Mexico thing.

Moses: The punk scene is angrier than it is here and kids dance over there, and it's not very organized, but it's pretty inspiring, and there's a lot of cool people in it.

MRR: Some people say that it's more of a political thing. That if there is a house show set up it's a benefit for something. It's not just a keg party. It's usually a benefit for a farming community or a squat or something.

Steve: I don't think it's less organized than in the US necessarily. Maybe in some respects, but in some respects it's more organized. Something I noticed was that there's a tendency for punks in a certain town to consider themselves "the collective," and it has more of a political overtone. It's not across the board, of course, but it's more common for people to think of punk as a political movement, and to think of things like "anarcho-punk" as being really important and really relevant. Also, people are more concerned with the content of the music that is coming through Mexico, whereas in the US people are like, "What do you guys sound like? You guys don't slander women, and say racist shit, do you? No. OK, cool." They want people that have content [in Mexico].

Moses: The other thing is that there is more than one collective in many cities, and they actually debate and battle and fight each other. It's pretty crazy.

Steve: Well sometimes.

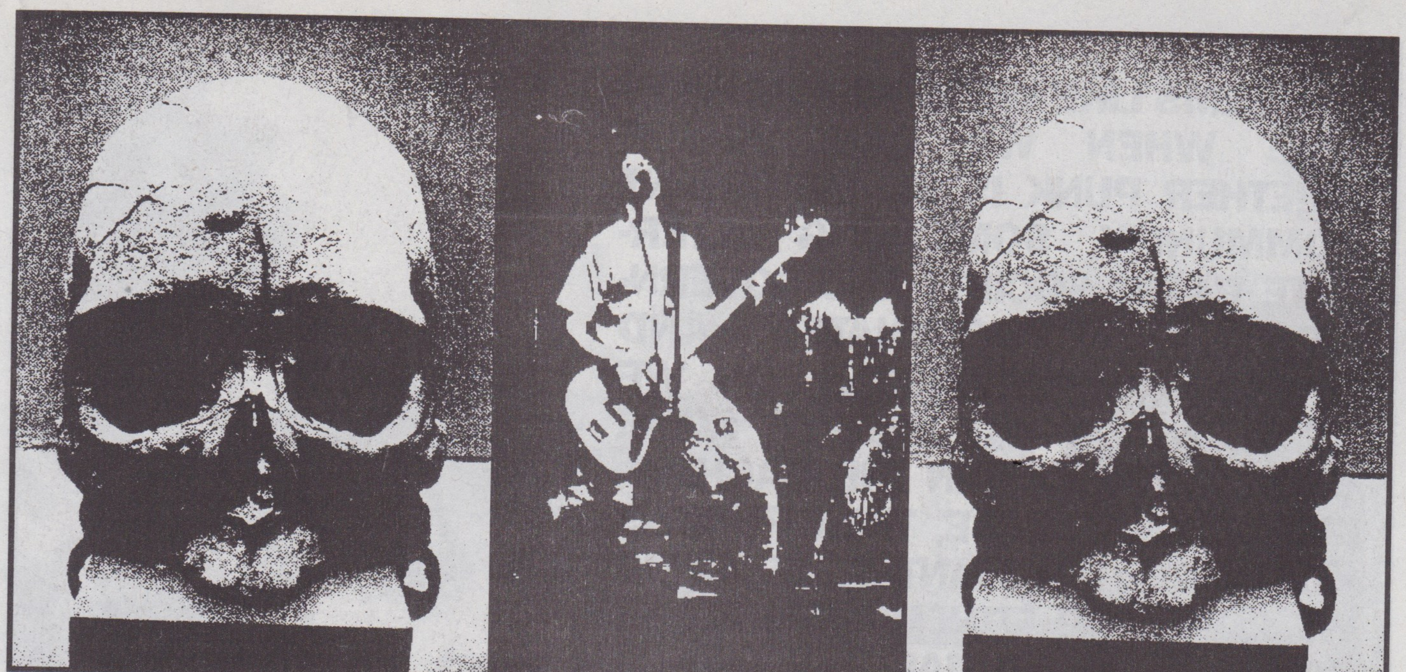
Dominik: It's more of a fringe thing. The punk thing, obviously, is more of a real alternative lifestyle. You're branded from society when you're punk in Mexico. Because obviously everybody is very poor, and it's just really hard. You have no resources whatsoever, whereas in the States, the punk thing has become just another commodity by default (you can't even really help it. It's all about product, making sure you get your thousand dollars, or how much money you put out for CDs, back It's not as much of an alternative lifestyle as in a lot of more impoverished countries.

Moses: Yeah, it's a lot harder to be a punk in Mexico.

Dominik: Especially in Mexico City. There are thousands of punks and it's like gang war, but it's like old school *Welcome to 1984* street level kind of shit.

Moses: Yeah, we played in this abandoned school, and there were a lot of people like five, six, seven hundred people there, and it was insane. It was the craziest thing I've ever seen.

Dominik: But definitely the music aspect is secondary as far as



that. It's more about lifestyle; what you represent, who you are affiliated with, what kind of causes you support, what kind of demos you organize, and what kind of benefits you organize. Definitely the punk and politics are very intrinsic. Whereas in the States it's totally kind of lost, in a way.

MRR: Along those lines, you guys have been around a long time and you're all fucking old and stuff (chuckling). How have you, in the states, seen the punk rock/DIY scene changing or growing or regressing?

Dominik: It's limping in a hardcore manner. There are a lot of really awesome kids who do a lot of cool shit, but it seems that only small to medium size towns have anything that is actually real, because people are so deprived of anything that they have to do it to just keep their sanity. In larger towns it's just too easy to have your normal job and do the punk thing on the side and still do great things, but it just does not really amount to as much as it could. Usually you have one person in one town who is doing everything like running the club—or a few kids are—and then it's just a small percent of people that are really involved in it. It's almost null at this point.

Steve: What I noticed when I first got into punk is that it was getting more and more political and intellectual. People were talking about things like DIY and how important the ethics were of being independent from corporate domination; fighting sexism, racism, homophobia were really important. Not just saying that, but people discussing that in zines and talking about that and that being a really integral element of the punk scene. And that still exists and it's still in the punk scene, but the dialog that was happening, and the idea of things like that being a major part of what the punk scene is about, has seemed to wane. A lot of people who thought of the punk scene as this socio-political movement community have since distanced themselves from punk as activists or anarchists. There is this divide happening where there are "punk rockers," a lot of whom are sincere people who believe in that whole idea of community still, but a lot of other people are apolitical nowadays.

MRR: Do you think it's moving from a politically active stance in the early 80s through the 90s, to people deciding that that is kind of hopeless and trying to make punk rock a community unto itself, without trying to change the outside world? For example, there are punk book distributors, publishers...

Moses: I think the community aspect of it might be dissolving, a lot of times. It seems like if it were a community then it would be unified and people would be doing a lot more shit.

Kelly: It seems like there are a lot of shallow divisions between people that really tend to get in the way, because Americans, and particularly people in the Bay Area, tend to get spoiled and jaded and overexposed and apathetic sometimes.

Steve: It seems like we're at a point in time when we can decide whether punk is an important community, something alternate to the society and government that dominates and oppresses the world, or we could let it go and be some other little cog in the machine. If that's the case, then punk is no longer relevant. So it seems we could go either way at this point. We could maintain and do something relevant.

Moses: One thing I thought about this tour that I heard a lot of times that the whole terrorist scare and 9-11 has affected touring bands and venues are getting shut down.

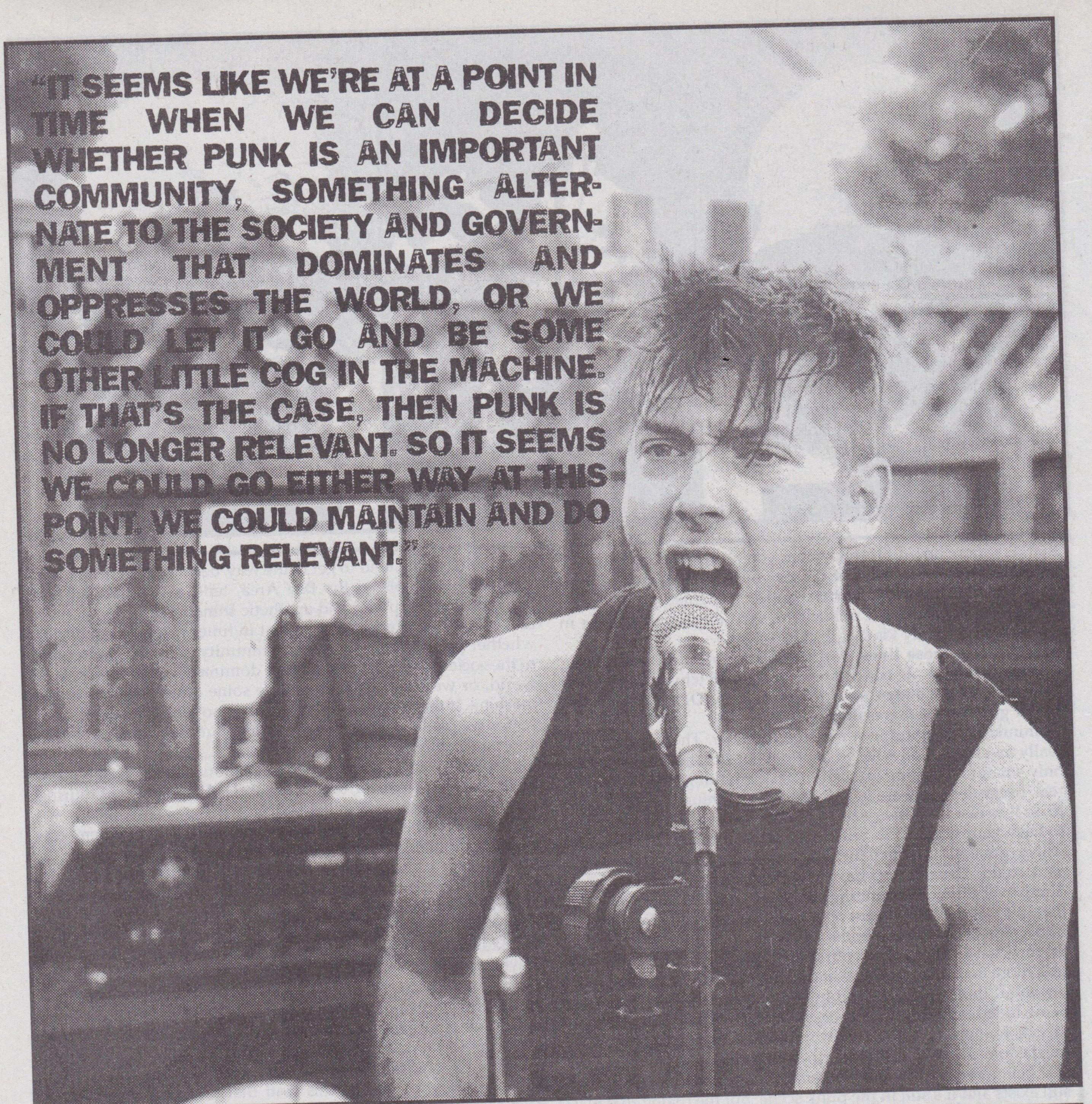
Dominik: It's definitely looked at with a new eye, where you could be a potential threat because of your beliefs.

MRR: Yeah, I know that is definitely happening in Portland and Seattle. People are getting picked up off the streets just for wearing black.

Dominik: Yeah, on tour we've met up with straight up train hopper kids who mean no harm to no one, except themselves maybe, but they would be arrested in train yards for terrorism and shit and incarcerated for three weeks with no possible cause for anything; just being poor kids hopping trains.

Steve: Something from the tour also that we just came off of that made me feel hopeful about the punk scene was that we could talk about the lyrics of our songs and say, "Fuck the war." "Fuck this government," and all this stuff that punk rock has always been about since I've been involved with it. Fighting this whole thing and expressing this disenchantment, and people are still supportive of that. People aren't suddenly patriotic even if the media is pushing that on everyone and all these people are driving around with fucking disposable flags on their cars. At least in the punk scene I see that everyone is pretty unified in being defiant against war and against oppression.

Dominik: Yeah, I think at this point there is a very clear division in the "punk rock music" scene and the "punk" scene where it actually represents somewhat of a different lifestyle than what your normal people have. Especially going on the last tour in the States it was so obvious that the only real punk shows are basement shows. People's house shows where it's strongly based on community and friends and shit. Most of them are in really tiny towns where all their friends come out and it's a big event and everyone exchanges awesome ideas and of course everybody gets drunk and stoned. Then you go to a club show and you try to feel the vibe and stuff. It's so stiff and you realize it's become



a commodity, a product.
Moses: Nobody goes to those [club] shows. It's weird.
Dominik: Even the crappiest, most crowded, dusty basement shows were so much better than any regular rock shows that you would think of.
Steve: With killer sound systems and all that bullshit.
Moses: drum risers.
Dominik: And then you see, especially now, where there is this huge element of the punk scene with a lot of people involved in it, a lot of bands who go out of their way to be almost obscure DIY people, grassroots to the bare bones. They do that. They have basement shows at their houses and do Food Not Bombs shit, and have bands in their basement who don't go out for Fat Records or whatever.
MRR: Yeah, a lot of people make an effort now to stay so called "un-successful." That's what people strive for now; to play garages for the rest of their lives.
Dominik: Exactly; it's because of how commodified the punk thing has become. A lot of people have realized that to embrace it [punk] to it's fullest potential they have to kind of reject it [the commodification] and do their own thing on the side. And that's really the punks of America that I experienced and witnessed when we was rock 'n rollin'.
MRR: Who wrote the song "Abort Nation?"
Steve: That was me.
Kelly: All the old shit. That was all Steve.
MRR: OK, it seems that it has two meanings. One is obvious, sexual freedom. But the other... there has definitely been this trend in punk rock since it first began of like "Fuck your parents." "Fuck the state." "Fuck the police." and to a certain extent punk's been pretty good at trying to live up to those ideals. But punks are definitely very traditional about their sexual relationships and it seems like your song addresses that.

Steve: Yeah, it's actually a critique of the Christian Right that is anti-abortion, and that element that is socially and politically partly to blame for the problem of abortion by imposing their values on people. So they try to impose the value that you shouldn't have sex before marriage. Therefore, marriage is for procreation (which is the Catholic Church's stance), and therefore contraception is fucked up. They have affected our government and society in a way that has suppressed people's sexualities and ability to be educated about sex. It has precipitated this problem with unwanted pregnancies. People are going to be in an environment which is hostile to alternate perspectives that say it's OK to have sex, to know about sex, to talk about sex, and to be a sexual person. The Christian Right are culpable for the fact that people have unwanted pregnancies and therefore are forced to go to an abortion clinic because they became pregnant in a way that is sinful, and that's amoral, and that's wrong. So many people who have unwanted pregnancies want to get out of that situation, and rather than give birth to a bastard child in this society, they go to an abortion clinic so they don't have to deal with what our society thinks of unmarried single mothers.

MRR: Kelly, obviously it's different being a woman in the punk community. Do you feel it's radically different from being a man in the punk community? Do you feel like you're treated completely differently?

Kelly: No, but I do feel different being a female and being in a band with two males, because I relate to woman very differently than I relate to men. The music industry in general and the punk community as well, is still male-dominated. I didn't play with very many bands with female members on tour. I was kind of surprised with how few there were considering how long we were on tour. That's kind of disappointing to me, but I met a lot of rad women. I know I inspired a lot of women. I don't really usually talk about feminist issues because I feel like just the fact that I'm up there doing shit means that I don't need to talk about doing it. I don't need to be an exception. It's kind of funny. Sometimes we'll play with bands with all male members and they'll talk about feminist issues. To me, to make it such an issue is to make woman special in a way that makes them not as equal.

MRR: Elevating?

Kelly: Yeah, women are powerful. I feel that it's demeaning in a certain way to make it such an issue. Women can just go out there and do shit. I don't know. It's hard for me to explain how I feel about that.

MRR: But you did do that Beltane show, and it was from your lips. It was a show that concentrated on women's power.

Kelly: Yeah, I went out of my way to get bands that had women in them. And for me I thought that would be really cool because I'm always inspired when I see women out there like Wendy O' Matik, my good friends, fire performers, women that are strong, that are doing shit, that are out in the world. You don't have to be out in the world to do a lot of amazing stuff, but I wanted to get women together to inspire because they are a minority.

MRR: So maybe sometimes an example is the best preaching you can do; not just you but anybody.

Kelly: Yeah, definitely.

MRR: Let's move on. Dominik, what's your role in the band?

Dominik: I'm an overall nuisance, road dawg, and artist.

Kelly: We're all artists.

Steve: He does some killer art and keeps us in line.

Moses: He makes sure Steve doesn't forget anything.

Steve: Or tries to make sure I don't lose anything, but I'm pretty good at losing things.

MRR: Do you write any lyrics, Moses?

Moses: I write about things I see going on around me—community dissolving, stuff like that, afraid of your fellow man to you're afraid of your neighbors. You don't meet them. You're not going to ever meet them. You could live next to them for your whole life and you won't meet them. I haven't been in the band as long as they have, but I've written the lyrics for two songs.

MRR: Most of the lyrics are pretty fucking... I went through the two CDs...

Dominik: Dark. dark. dark.

MRR: Very, very dark, but I'm sorry to say this guys, but usually the last sentence ends on this upbeat note.

Moses: Yeah, we do that.

Kelly: I've never recognized that trend.

Moses: I've seen it. Yeah we do that move.

Steve: Why are you sorry for that?

MRR: It's much like everything is fucked...but...we're here.

Steve: There was a song that I intentionally did that on. Because I didn't want to leave people...

Moses: Oh, the other thing I wrote lyrics about was how we tend to usurp other cultures and sell it back to them cheap or really expensive, depending. You can grab a culture and turn it into a popular wall decoration.

MRR: Any last statements.

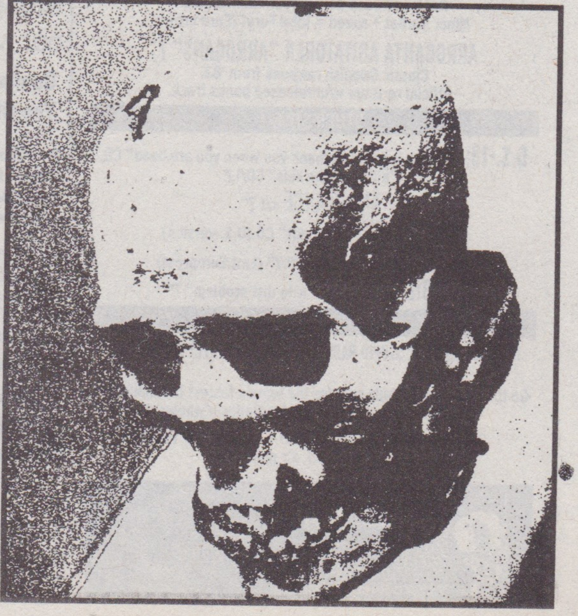
Dominik: Yeah, I want to say hi to my rats.

Steve: Tell them Kelly says, "Keep on truckin'."

Kelly: No.

Dominik: Eat vegan food and fuck shit up. That's what I got to say.

www.lesserotwo.tripod.com/5html



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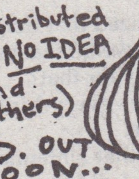

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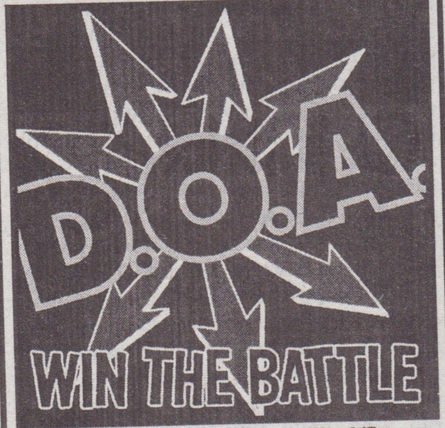

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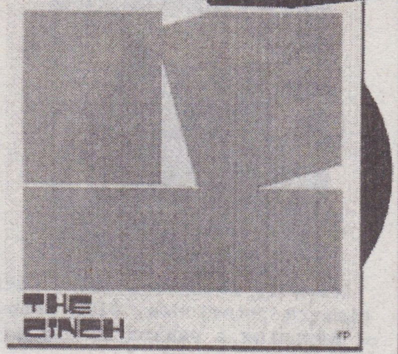

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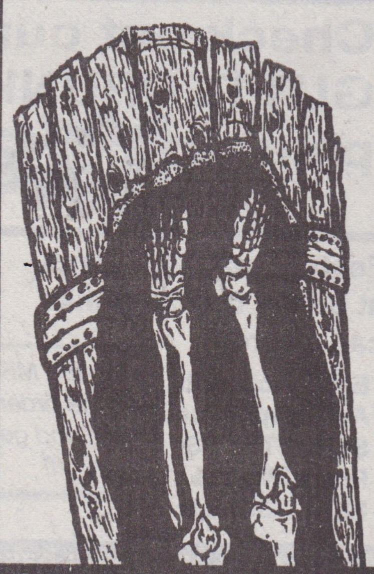

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BARSE

Formed in 1997, Barse have divided the punk community ever since. Returning to the original punk of 1976/1977 for inspiration, they're back with a brand new album, *They Said It Couldn't Happen Here, and it Didn't*. I first interviewed the band two years ago for the first edition of my fanzine *Rant* and have championed the band ever since their first release Negative Reaction. Their brand of snotty, obnoxious punk took me right back to 1977. Barse have a unique sound, and for me have captured something special from my teenage years. *Andy (guitar and vocals), Gash (drums and vocals), Jeff (bass), Wayne (lead guitar).* Interview by Mick Rant

MRR: Why the name Barse?

Gash: This current line up has been together since March 2002. We lost our drummer, so I went from the guitar to the drums, and got a lifelong friend Wayne to play guitar. The line up that we have now is the best that we've had. We are writing and recording new tracks every week and planning a summer jaunt around the UK. The name Barse means the little bit between yer balls and arse. Sounded funny as fuck to us when we first heard it mentioned, and still makes me laugh today when people innocently ask what the name means. It breaks the ice when you meet people at gigs for the first time. Also it's fucking stupid, which appeals to me at no end.

MRR: Tell us about your first album, you had some problems with the release and the recording?

Gash: From day one, we had problems. We had our shit together in time for the recording date, but when we walked into the studio, the producer/engineer didn't have a clue what he was doing. He was also sheepish as fuck when we asked him if he was ever into punk, later explaining to us, "the punks weren't nice to me." He wouldn't look at the band during the recording. When he heard the lyrics to the songs, he couldn't believe it at all. He kept saying, "Is he really singing that?" The last band he had in the studio was the fucking Lighthouse Family. The first mix was shite, so we came back in a week or so to remix it. We got the CD off him and Andy took it upstairs to have a listen, stopping at the toilet on the way. While he was having a piss he dropped the disc down the toilet, picked it out covered in piss and took it to Nick (who "produced" the CD). Nick took the disc off him and wiped it on his jeans and then asked how it got wet. His face dropped when he was told, and we were kicked out the studio. Punk bands don't get in there any more, after they'd seen the state of us. Then the bloke who pressed the CD (some cunt out of the Count Bishops) fucked the album up even more, managing to turn the overall volume down, and trying to get more money out of Trev (*Savage Amusement*), taking him for a ride by saying that he thought we were a "right wing" band due to the *Savage Amusement* logo, a bulldog! Then came the false Indian voices, pretending he was someone else. We thought it wouldn't happen, but then the album arrived, and after that, things really started to take off.

MRR: Your album got good reviews across most of the board. Did you expect that response for your debut release? And what do you have against Meatloaf?

Andy: I thought at the time, we had more of a chance growing tits, than anyone liking the CD. But when every review came back positive, and all the zines interviewing us were saying what a breath of fresh air we were, going against the grain musically and lyrically, we thought fuck this, we have to keep going now. We wrote songs constantly between 1997 and 1999, and had all the material there. We were offending people who didn't get the picture, the PC types who pretend to be "right on" were getting in a flap, so that was a good enough reason to keep going. Plus, I love playing in a band. It makes me wet. And as for Meatloaf, he was on a show in the U.K (TFI Friday) singing out of tune and sweating gravy. He's so fat, he needs a stripe painted down his back so people can tell if he's walking or rolling. Anyway, he inspired us to write, "Meatloaf is a Fat Fucking Idiot" on the spot. Same as Peado Townsend is begging for a Barse tune. He's a perfect target, big nosed kiddie fiddler.

MRR: What do you think of the punk scene today?

Gash: I personally think it's too up its own arse, all that political shit pisses me off. We don't write songs about all that, because everyone else seems to. We try to steer clear of all that. I want to write songs about everyday life, what happens to us, and people we know. I'm not saying I don't care about how much we are all shit on, but how many times must the same thing be said, and usually to a complete racket, so you can't understand the lyrics anyway. We try to make people happy when they listen to us, not depress them. Barse sound like a '77 band, because that's what we're all into, loads of

www.lprhardcore.net/htr/barse

fun and a big fuck off to everyone. The definition of punk in the Oxford English Dictionary is "A deliberately outrageous type of rock music, popular in the 1970s; a follower of this." I really don't care who I offend. And it's not because I agree with what is being said, it's because it makes me laugh. I think it's called a "sense of humor." Punk was always about breaking the rules, not making them. So don't take us so seriously, just enjoy! I'm into Crass now as much as I was when I first heard them, (same goes for Discharge, Dead Kennedys), but the amount of bands rehashing it killed it for me. I stopped buying punk in the mid 80s, because for me, it was absolute wank. Bands like Raped, Snivelling Shits, and Killjoys still do it for me! And the current trend of bands singing in American accents when they come from Leeds makes me laugh. It's sad as fuck when we talk to people who claim to be punks because they like Offspring, and fucking Green Day, get a life; and emo, what the fuck is that all about? We recently did a gig with Crashed Out, classic Oi Band, and it was such a good atmosphere. There is no need to pretend you're from anywhere else or trying to be anyone else. DIY, it works for us! Plus the fact we are bypassed whenever there is any event, i.e. H.I.T.S and certain "all day events." If your shite and rehash the same old message, with a "ska-core" backing, you're automatically accepted into the fold. If you ask me, it's for the birds, keep it.

MRR: You have a brand new single and album out. Did you find a decent studio to record it this time?

Gash: A decent studio? Fuck that! The single *Council Estate* was released on Rapid Pulse from the US and the album *They Said it Couldn't Happen Here...and it Didn't* was released on Hells Tone Records from Finland. The recording was done in my living room, on an 8-track recorder! I've spent the last five years buying gear for the band, so we didn't have the same scenario as before. The recording is exactly how we wanted it, because I did it. I've accumulated so much gear, my living room looks like a studio, which we've christened "Abbey Normal Studios." Now though, we use a big hall, which we've rented from the local church. The vicar walked in one night, and we were playing "Sisters Making Pornos." He was standing there for about ten minutes before we noticed him. It then clicked that I was wearing a Destroy top with a picture of Jesus nailed to the cross upside down, naked! He had a laugh about it though, and even asked for an album. But with what the clergy get up to, abusing choirboys and such, I suppose we are pretty mediocre.

MRR: The track "I Hate Amerikka" off your new album may lose you a lot of fans, especially in America. Does this concern you any?

Gash: The song is about the way the USA bastardize/change the English language and the fact that we are becoming more like the USA everyday. Bowing to pressure, Becoming the United States of Europe. What concerns me more than losing fans though, and I'm sure some *MRR* readers would agree, is how close Bush and his pet monkey Blair are pushing for World War II. An illiterate redneck intent on waging war in the Middle East is not a good thing. Twenty to thirty Islamic terrorists caused the Sept. 11 atrocity. What if twenty, thirty thousand of them decided to take up the cause, in one go? The way it's going, that's exactly what will happen. As this interview is being put down, terrorists have been caught 200 miles away in Manchester, with Ricin, (a nerve agent popular with local junkies), so it's very close to home. Britain has had terrorist attacks for years from the IRA, who are in part funded by "people sympathetic to the Cause" in the USA, but that's OK! However, when it happens on your own back door, the shit hits the fan, and it's gung-ho, kill 'em all! It's time America and Britain got out of the Middle East, and let them get on with it. The Muslim/Islamic culture goes back a long time before ours, yet Bush and Blair seem intent on trying to crush them. No one else has done a very good job of crushing them in the last couple thousand years, and Bush and Blair will fail, because when they say they will fight till the last man, they mean it. The USA and Britain had killed twice the number of innocent men, women and children in Afghanistan with "smart bombs" (surely a weapon of mass destruction) by July 4 2002, than those who were killed, in the attacks on the twin towers. America has its own "terrorists" that tried to blow Gaddafi up in 1986, so he retaliated with Lockerbie. What do you think will happen when Baghdad is leveled? Anyway that's only my opinion, and I truly hope I am wrong, but I have a bad feeling on this one. I think war is inevitable, so it'll be one hundred thousand Iraqis dead and ten of our soldiers killed, probably by "friendly fire" like the last Gulf war. Then it's on to Iran, Syria. Not Saudi Arabia though, cutting heads off for stealing bread is OK if they are keeping the oil safe for the West. A better idea would be to put Blair, Bush, Bin Laden and Saddam in a cage with pick axe handles and bike chains and force them to set about each other. Or better still; let Charlie Manson interrogate the fuckers.

MRR: What sort of reception do you get at gigs? Do you offend many punks?

Gash: We usually go down great wherever we play. We get a lot of compliments just for being different from other bands. We recently played with a band from Seattle called Red Martian, who were blown away by the scene in Newcastle. We were blown away by the fact they come halfway around the fucking world to play in a pub on a Sunday afternoon. As for offending anyone, I thought that was the point! We have played gigs where the soundman walked off as the band walked on, traveled miles to shit-holes (The Primrose, c/o Royston Vasey, Leeds) to be met with nepotism and contempt. Andy "child molester" Cactus dedicated almost a full page of abuse to us in small print in his shitty little zine, so we must have touched a nerve with him. Why he was dancing to us though, when he thought we were so bad, is beyond me, (Get a bath, you scruffy twat!). He still mentions Barse over and over though. If you are easily offended don't listen to punk, listen to the Human League. It's all about breaking the rules, not dictatiang them. The one's that do get uptight are nearly always like this cunt, the crusty PC types, who fucking stink, and probably couldn't score in a glass brothel, with a diamond tipped cock. But we always get a reaction. Whether they love us or hate us, we are still talked about. We even had a fanzine running a big debate on Barse, inviting people to give their views on our music and lyrics. And this was just as the band was starting. But if anyone wants us to play, we are always available for gigs, the more the merrier! We are open to any offers.

MRR: Anything planned for the coming months in the Barse camp?

Gash: We've got a gig with Drongos for Europe on the 29th of March in Newcastle, and in April there's a new 7" out on Hells Tone Records (cheers Vesku!). We are in the middle of recording two new songs, and there are two old songs, which we've dug out. There is also a Barse website with lyrics and reviews. Then it's recording time again, doing the demos for the next album. Maybe we'll do an emo album next, emotionally fucking disturbed that is. Seriously though, the songs for the next album have already been chosen and are being recorded after the 7" tracks are done. So those that are on the "I hate Barse" bandwagon that's tough, because we've a lot more to come.

MRR: Anything else you would like to add?

Barse: Thanks to everyone at *Maximum Rock n Roll* for giving us the chance to vent our spleen, Vesku at Hells Tone Records, Jim at Rapid Pulse/Underground Medicine, and Rob, our photographer, and you Mick (*Rant*) for conducting this interview. Also all the fanzines that have supported us, *Savage Amusement, Rant, Anti Social Behaviour, 4 Minute Warning, Jellybrain, Part Time Punk, Anarchoi, Puke, Runnin' Feart, Cod-eye, Toxic Stress* and all the other zines I can't remember at this time. Cheers!

NIGHTMARE

INTERVIEW & TRANSLATION BY KEVIN HUNT.

NIGHTMARE

NIGHTMARE IS: MAA: VOCALS, MAKOTO: GUITAR, YAMAUCHI: BASS, OSAMU: DRUMS.

MRR: So when did you all start playing hardcore punk?
Makoto: I've been playing in hardcore bands for 18 years now. Since '83-'84. My first band was Doubt, with members from Himeji and Kobe.
MRR: Where were you living then?
Makoto: In Himeji, out in the sticks!
Maa-san: I was in Okayama. We got to know each other when we were both still in high school. When we started playing together, over half of our songs were covers: GBH, Dead Kennedys, GISM, and Peter and the Test Tube Babies. We would play in Osaka. I actually quit Nightmare at one point when I was still at high school.
Makoto: That's right, you did.
Maa-san: I moved to Osaka, then Makoto came to live Osaka too and we started playing again. That was back in '87. The bass player was a guy called Shige, and Osamoon played drums.
MRR: When was the first show as that line-up?
Makoto: That would've been in Himeji, right?
Maa-san: Yeah. '87 or '88, on Lip Cream and Outo's "Bloody Summer" tour.
MRR: What do your lyrics focus on?
Maa-san: Stuff I've thought a lot about myself. Some songs are about society—no real message, more like personal thoughts and observations. Not a hell of a lot of songs about the world's problems, but there are a few.
MRR: What has been your most memorable show so far?
Maa-san: There've been tons!
Makoto: Well, most recently the shows that we've played with Forward and Gurento.
Maa-san: Yeah, and that show in Kobe in July.
MRR: You've been involved with the Japanese hardcore scene for a long time. What are some of the major differences between the scene now compared with the scene ten or twelve years ago?
Maa-san: Well, for a start, the amount of bands around now has increased for sure. Bands tend to be a lot more divided now by musical style. That's one of biggest differences that I see straight off—certain bands only playing together at certain venues. People who go and see the bands kind of only go and check out bands of one particular style.
MRR: How was this different a decade earlier?
Maa-san: Ten years ago, and earlier than that even, there were significantly fewer bands around. So punks and skins would play show together—even new wave bands would play on the same bill. That's the way it was back then. Definitely more of a mix back then. One really remarkable difference is how much easier putting on and playing a show or releasing a record is nowadays. But you know, because it is so much easier to be a hardcore band now, we don't have that feeling of like, "Well, it was damn hard and we had all these obstacles but we managed to do it nonetheless!" so much anymore. It's too easy now. It doesn't mean as much without all the effort.
MRR: So it's become much more acceptable nowadays?
Maa-san: Without a doubt. You can even have a mohawk and still get
a job here now. There weren't so many punks around back then. Now though, you can be both a punk and a citizen!
Makoto: And they try to tell us now on the news on TV that it's the "punk era"!
Maa-san: You can play at almost any club you like now because the owners know that punk sells and that people will buy tickets. Whereas in the past it was really hard to find a club that would even let punk or hardcore bands play. There was a time when Nightmare couldn't play in Osaka for two years straight!
MRR: Back when punk was considered a threat by the public at large?
Maa-san: Yeah, that's right.
MRR: It seems that in the underground scenes, especially the punk and hardcore scenes, bands come and go within a very short space of time. What's your take on this? How come Nightmare has kept going for so long?
Maa-san: A lot of people look at their bands with the same kind of attitude that they'd look

at a shitty job. They aren't into it enough to really put in the hard work and effort it takes, and so they quit. Nightmare is not like that. A band is a human relationship. You stay together and build something and continue with it. We're still trying—been together for well over ten years. We have all kinds of problems come at us, we argue, but we really want to do this band together. With this kind of attitude, you can achieve a lot more. Above all, we won't quit just like that.

Makoto: I don't understand how people can just up and quit their bands. What a half-assed attitude!

Maa-san: It's like when you have differences with your friends, they're still your friends. Everyone's different. It's when you use those differences and the good things that come out of them to your advantage that you can do something truly special. Sometimes people are stubborn and won't bend and you have major clashes, but you know, that's pretty interesting too! When it's hard and challenging then it's fun. If it's too easy then it becomes boring and pointless. Why we continue with Nightmare can't be expressed 100% by words alone.

MRR: It's more of a feeling or passion?

Makoto: Yeah, that's right.

MRR: How often do you guys play?

Maa-san: Not as much as we used to. We used to play about 50 shows a year. Haven't toured much lately, but we still play once or twice a month in Osaka. The odd show in other places.

MRR: Tell us about the sax player!

Maa-san: The sax player who's on our latest single started jamming with us a little while back. He actually played with our previous drummer in another band. He was a regular member for a while, but he quit and just plays a few songs at shows with us from time to time whenever he feels like it.

Makoto: I really like the sax. It's a lot of fun. I was really surprised how it sounded.

Maa-san: We would even like to try something other than sax. We actually had a piano player at one stage too.

MRR: Really?

Makoto: But she didn't end up staying with us.

Maa-san: She had her own band going already. But it was definitely interesting while it lasted.

Makoto: It's great with other instruments.

MRR: Did you record with the piano?

Makoto: No. Only one gig and that was it.

MRR: Is it difficult working full-time and playing in a serious band for you guys?

(Cultural note: In Japan employers often push their workers to work very hard hours that sometimes take exhausting mental and physical tolls greater than those in Western countries.)

Maa-san: Well, I can easily bear working and playing in a band at the same time. It's more a case of which one puts a squeeze on the other.

Makoto: It's fun for me to be doing both.

Maa-san: Even though you wish you could just do the band, the reality is that you still have to work. It's just a matter of balancing them both.

Makoto: But still, working an exhausting or dangerous job everyday can have a good influence on your music.

Maa-san: That's the kind of life you live, it's your existence, so…

Makoto: On the other hand, you know, if you are too comfortable in life financially or whatever, it will reflect in your music. It's like a musical senility. Can't play anything new or original.

Maa-san: When a lot of bands and musicians get to our age and haven't been able to get on a major label they tend to throw in the towel. I'm even talking about some people who are playing a similar style of music to us. What I want is for younger bands to look at us and think, "Let's go further musically than these guys. Let's do something even more different." I wouldn't want them to think that this is as far as it can go. I want to see them try something completely different. Something more. Then I'd like to look at them and what they've achieved and think to myself, "Ah, we helped change this." We as Nightmare are constantly changing too. I see a lot of people in leather jackets and studs. I've always wanted to be different than that. Sure, they stand out, but I want to stand out even more for doing something even more different.

MRR: Which is definitely more "punk" than buying into the safe and predetermined "punk package." Is that what you're saying?

Makoto: Absolutely!

Maa-san: Otherwise you might as well just go put on a suit and tie like some straight-looking company worker and get on stage or go to the show, because I mean to me they both are looking pretty similar right now. OK, I know that not everyone in studs and leather is like that, but do you get my point?

Makoto: There's a lot of that around. If that's your punk then you can have it! We know that we are still trying and searching.

Maa-san: And as far as we're concerned, that's far more punk.

MRR: Can you recommend some good Japanese bands who are currently active in the hardcore scene?

Maa-san: Forward, Tetsuarei, you know…Its not like we're all great buddies who chat on the phone all the time but we've always played together and we will continue to do so. Warhead especially. Back when no other bands were around and we were all really young they blew our minds and we've been playing shows together ever since. There are a lot of good bands around, really.

Makoko: I'm into really original sounding bands: rock, reggae, all kinds of stuff.

Maa-san: Punk's not about just one sound. There are reggae bands who I consider punk, folk bands who I consider punk. I take everything into account, not just their fashion sense.

MRR: Do you guys want to tour overseas?

Makoto: Yes, we do.

Maa-san: England!

Makoto: Vietnam. Not with the band but by myself!

Maa-san: Anywhere—England, the USA—lots of places. It used to be my dream that we'd get to tour Japan and we did that several times. Nowadays any band can quite easily. No big deal. Lip Cream, even though they weren't on a major label, endeavored to create a tourable route throughout Japan. Everyone followed that route afterward playing shows.

Yamauchi: I'd like to go to Jamaica.

Maa-san: Jamaica, Africa, places like that. Somewhere different.

MRR: If you could go on tour with any band who would it be?

Makoto: Poison Idea!

MRR: They are playing again aren't they?

Maa-san: I believe they are.

Yamauchi: But Jerry A is the only original member, I hear.

Makoto: If Pig Champion isn't playing guitar, then I'm not interested!

Maa-san: Battalion of Saints and Iggy Pop.

MRR: Where do you see things heading with the band?

Maa-san: No major plans. We just take things as they come. I don't like planning too far ahead. When you see us do something new, it means it's just come to us. We'll keep going somehow.

Makoto: We just do it.

Maa-san: We don't know what's coming tomorrow. Something terrible perhaps! That's what makes life interesting.

MRR: Anything you want to say in closing?

Maa-san: You might like our records, but come over and see us live. Our live shows are our best album!

WHAT I WANT IS FOR YOUNGER BANDS TO LOOK AT US AND THINK, "LET'S GO FURTHER MUSICALLY THAN THESE GUYS. LET'S DO SOMETHING EVEN MORE DIFFERENT." I WOULDN'T WANT THEM TO THINK THAT THIS IS AS FAR AS IT CAN GO. I WANT TO SEE THEM TRY SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT... SOMETHING MORE...

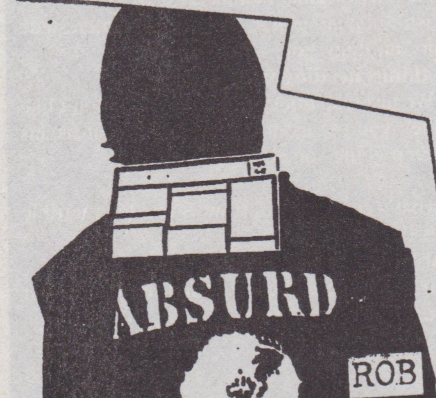
ZINES RULE, OK?!

A few weeks ago a bunch of us who do zines around the New York area sat down at the ABC No Rio Zine Library to talk about zines and music. Everyone does a fine job of introducing themselves so I won't do that here, but since we all love hearing from others, here's where we can be found:

Stuart-gameofthearseholes@hotmail.com
Rob-Distort81@aol.com
Jill-jhubley@pratt.edu
Stefan-readytofight13@aol.com
Dave-fightordie@hotmail.com

Enjoy the discussion.

Jill: First, I need to point out that I'm the only person here that doesn't live with their parents.
Stuart: OK, moving on…
Jill: I do *Trash Faction* and I'm working on the fourth issue at the moment. My fanzine covers garage punk rock and occasionally hardcore when I feel like it. I feel that it's important for me to do it because the garage scene is so permeated with misogynists and I would like to eradicate that. My zine is usually, like, 40 pages; so it's pretty thick.
Stuart: My zine is *Game of the Arseholes* and it's about music. I wanted to do a short zine because the zine I did before-
Jill: -*Disturbing the Peace*-
Stuart: -was too long, and now *Game of the Arseholes* has become a long zine as well because I have a lot to say, I guess.



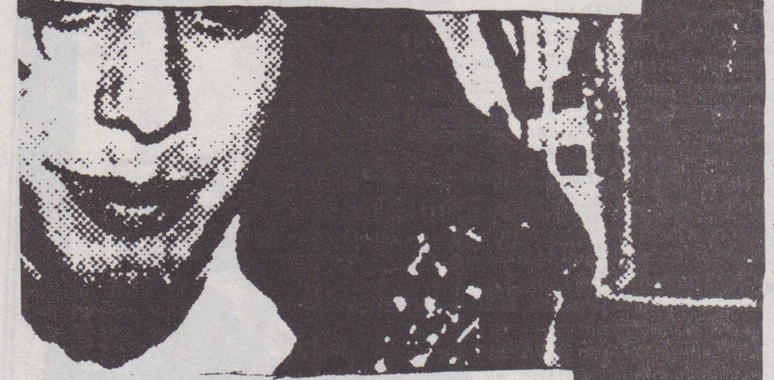
Jill: Why did you change the name? Why didn't you just stay with *Disturbing the Peace?*
Stuart: *Disturbing the Peace* had some associations that I was moving away from with what I wanted to write about, and just sort of who I was as a person.
Jill: So you wanted a fresh start.
Stuart: Yeah. And I specifically didn't want *Game of the Arseholes* to have anything about politics or the scene like I'd written about in *Disturbing the Peace.* Now I'm moving in a direction where it's going to be different again, but still focused on music.
Jill: Why is it going to be different?
Stuart: I'm trying to get more literary-to write about music in a more narrative fashion rather than just writing about a specific record or something like that.
Dave: I do a zine called *Destroy What Bores You,* the title is stolen from the Feederz. I mostly write about music, but it's a broad coverage of music, basically a reflection of the music that moves and inspires me: various sorts of rock 'n' roll music at its rawest, most energetic-its *maximum.* So a lot of times that's hardcore and a lot of times it could be garage; it could be old 60s punk or whatever different stuff I'm into at the time.
Stuart: And that's reflected on the pages of your zine because there

are quotes from whatever you're listening to at the moment that you lay it out.
Dave: Yeah, usually whenever I'm laying it out there's some sort of line from whatever song I'm listening to, whether it be Jed Whitey, or Really Red, or The Next.
Jill: Or Love.
Dave: Or Love, or X, or the Desperate Bicycles.
Stefan: I do *Panic Attack* and I'm working on the third issue now. The first two had some politics, but I'm moving away from that. The third issue is about the punk scene in the Northeast today. I'm also working on issue 3.5, which is a personal issue, which I've never done before.
Stuart: Why do you want to make it a separate issue?
Stefan: Because there's one story throughout the entire zine, and I didn't think that would fit in, since issue three is very tightly themed. So I wanted to separate them.

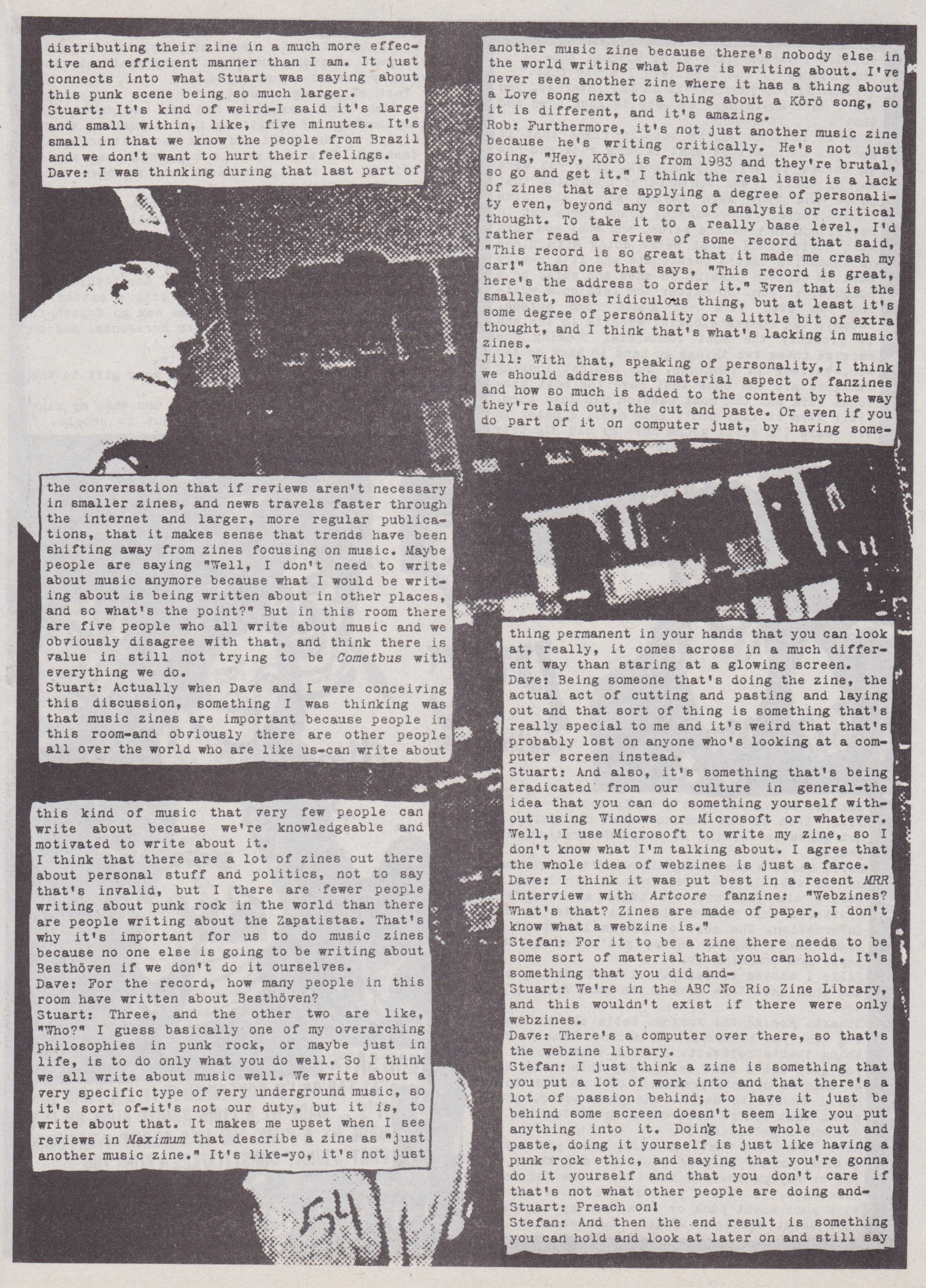
Rob: *My zine is called Organ of Hope.* I've done seven issues so far, and the eighth is in the works. It's all about hardcore, nothing else. I wanted to start a one-page zine because I was really into reading old zines like Radio Riot and Bullshit Monthly, and I thought that those were really cool and they served their purpose. There was no filler, it was just one page, and they were a lot more focused on the news, what was happening at the time. I wanted to do something like that, so the first couple were one page and it was local goings-on type of stuff, and whatever else I put in there-reviews and stuff. I wanted to reprint something from an old zine whether it was an interview or an old record review, or just something that I found interesting, because I was buying up these old zines, and I loved reading stuff in them and finding out things that you couldn't find out about from just listening to a record. There are a lack of zines like that now and I know that there are plenty of people out there who like reading old shit, so I started doing it.
After the first four or five issues I had more stuff that I wanted to write about, so it became a few pages more. Now it's on and off whether it's one page, but I think the original intent is still there, in that I don't want there to be any filler, I don't want there to be soap-boxing about politics. It's just hardcore shit that I like.
Stuart: Something that you said brought up a topic that we wanted to cover, which is the idea that zines nowadays are not really used to get across the news of the scene. In the early days of punk, zines were used to spread news between different cities and countries. And I think information just traveled slower back then, so it was OK to wait a couple of months to read a review of a record, whereas now people expect everything to come out really quickly, and it takes a really long time to get a zine out. We wanted to talk about that shift and how that changed the role of zines. I don't necessarily think any of us are conscious of it when we write something, like, "This is gonna be outdated," because if you have something good to say, you have something good to say, and that's why Rob wants to reprint old stuff in his zine. But, the question would be, "How does the internet, for one, impact this news aspect of zine production?"
Dave: I don't go out of my way to write reviews, but it happens from time to time. I used to think this is going to be outdated or it's quite possible the record will be out of print by the time the zine ever comes out, but then I started looking more at actually having the review being something unto itself than having the review being an advertisement for a record. I think that as a consequence of the fact that you don't need reviews anymore in smaller zines to advertise records maybe it's giving reviews another life of their own where they can actually be more substantial. That's sort of a throwback to the old rock journalism days.
Stuart: Lester Bangs wrote a 20-page article that was a record review. Yeah, I think that's a good point, because nowadays in big zines that review hundreds of records, a lot of times the reviews are indistinguishable from the sort of things you read on a distro list that're trying to sell a record. I think it's important for me and Dave to write about records in more of an essay format, where it's not about the commercial aspect, it's more about placing it in an historical context and placing it in a personal context, too-what it does for us. I think that's something I would like to see more people doing when they're writing

STUART SAYS:

"I THINK THAT THERE ARE A LOT OF ZINES OUT THERE ABOUT PERSONAL STUFF AND POLITICS, NOT TO SAY IT'S INVALID, BUT I JUST WANNA SAY THAT THE FACT IS THERE ARE FEWER PEOPLE WRITING ABOUT PUNK ROCK IN THE WORLD THAN THERE ARE PEOPLE WRITING ABOUT THE ZAPATISTAS. THAT'S WHY IT'S IMPORTANT FOR US TO DO MUSIC ZINES BECAUSE NO ONE ELSE IS GOING TO BE WRITING ABOUT BESTHÖVEN IF WE DON'T DO IT OURSELVES."



reviews, rather than thinking about how the review's going to effect record sales, although obviously, if I write about something I like, I want people to buy it—but that's not the motivation.
Jill: Well, I think in terms of reviews, a lot of people writing music zines these days see them as part of some prescribed format, like you have your columns and your reviews, and blah blah blah. After you do a certain number of issues, then maybe you start to think about what you're doing. The first issue you're just excited to be writing, then once you start thinking about it, you realize that the review section might not be as important or necessary. In the issue I'm doing now, I don't have a review section at all, because I've come to realize that if I really want to talk about something or promote it I might as well just write two pages about it and forget about the other records, and I think that's something that you're seeing more in paper zines. In *Tight Pants* zine, she does a review section, but it's not stapled in the zine, so you can just throw it away.
Rob: That is all part of the larger problem, which is my main problem, with what's wrong with zines. Even beyond the reviews, there's a lack critical thinking applied to the material that people are presenting, and it's like what Stuart said: you read reviews and 99.9% of the time the review reads as if Tragedy, for instance, had a press release. You barely ever read a zine that's like, "This record sucks." People are only reviewing records that they like and so, in essence, when they say "This sounds like this, it's available from here" then you know they're only doing an advertisement. I think it's just that zines need to be a little more substantial and a little more worth reading. People need to start applying a certain degree of thought to the music that they're listening to and that they feel they want to write about, instead of writing a little blurb that's an advertisement. I'm just as guilty as anyone, because I write reviews in my zine, and usually they're short, which is partly dictated by the nature of my zine, that it's one page, but I think a lot of the time I could write three pages on one record.
Jill: I think sometimes people are very motivated by advertisers, and the need to have them fund their zines.
Stuart: Do any of us take ads?
Rob: No.
Jill: For a while I took just whatever for five bucks each. But I've stopped doing that because it's stupid and, well, I also work at a copy shop, so I don't need to pay for my zines, so that's a luxury. I think a lot of people feel the need to bring in some money so they can produce their zines cheaply, and the reviews reflect that. I was taking ads for a while where I was like, "This stuff is total garbage," and the guy from the record company was like, "What was *that?*"
Stuart: You said nobody writes reviews that say, "This sucks." I don't do that. Part of the problem is that the punk scene is so small that it's really hard to be critical of bands that—you know, all of us have friends in bands we don't like. The way I get around that problem is just by not reviewing those records. I wish it were more acceptable to be really critical and to say what you actually think about things and people wouldn't get their feelings hurt and friendships would end over it and stuff like that. I don't have any answer for how to solve that problem, but it's something that I think is an issue for the punk scene specifically because it's so small.
Jill: Because it's so community oriented it's hard to distinguish between the art and the maker of the art.
Dave: A lot of people everywhere have problems distinguishing that.
Stefan: People hear music on the internet so easily, so many zines don't focus on writing real reviews anymore because they can write a few words and people can just go hear it for themselves with ease. With older zines, people hadn't heard of those bands or heard that music, or didn't have a medium to hear that music anywhere. Now the internet and being able to hear the music easily defeats the purpose of writing a big long review.
Stuart: I think that a lot of people may believe that, but there are certainly a lot of people all over the world who aren't connected to the internet, and I think it's a shame that so much of the punk scene assumes that everyone is. I know I have that problem myself, but the punk scene is so much larger than a bunch of middle-class white kids on the East coast, which is what all of us here are.
Dave: So a few people are actually distributing their zine to places that don't have that. *R'Lyeh Rising*.
Stuart: *Mangelslakt*.
Rob: To me it's really important to keep in mind that I'm writing this zine and I'm really lazy about distributing it and stuff, but there's people writing zines in Brazil who don't have plumbing, who are writing and



distributing their zine in a much more effective and efficient manner than I am. It just connects into what Stuart was saying about this punk scene being so much larger.
Stuart: It's kind of weird-I said it's large and small within, like, five minutes. It's small in that we know the people from Brazil and we don't want to hurt their feelings.
Dave: I was thinking during that last part of the conversation that if reviews aren't necessary in smaller zines, and news travels faster through the internet and larger, more regular publications, that it makes sense that trends have been shifting away from zines focusing on music. Maybe people are saying "Well, I don't need to write about music anymore because what I would be writing about is being written about in other places, and so what's the point?" But in this room there are five people who all write about music and we obviously disagree with that, and think there is value in still not trying to be *Cometbus* with everything we do.
Stuart: Actually when Dave and I were conceiving this discussion, something I was thinking was that music zines are important because people in this room-and obviously there are other people all over the world who are like us-can write about this kind of music that very few people can write about because we're knowledgeable and motivated to write about it.
I think that there are a lot of zines out there about personal stuff and politics, not to say that's invalid, but I there are fewer people writing about punk rock in the world than there are people writing about the Zapatistas. That's why it's important for us to do music zines because no one else is going to be writing about Besthöven if we don't do it ourselves.
Dave: For the record, how many people in this room have written about Besthöven?
Stuart: Three, and the other two are like, "Who?" I guess basically one of my overarching philosophies in punk rock, or maybe just in life, is to do only what you do well. So I think we all write about music well. We write about a very specific type of very underground music, so it's sort of-it's not our duty, but it *is*, to write about that. It makes me upset when I see reviews in *Maximum* that describe a zine as "just another music zine." It's like-yo, it's not just another music zine because there's nobody else in the world writing what Dave is writing about. I've never seen another zine where it has a thing about a Love song next to a thing about a Körö song, so it is different, and it's amazing.
Rob: Furthermore, it's not just another music zine because he's writing critically. He's not just going, "Hey, Körö is from 1983 and they're brutal, so go and get it." I think the real issue is a lack of zines that are applying a degree of personality even, beyond any sort of analysis or critical thought. To take it to a really base level, I'd rather read a review of some record that said, "This record is so great that it made me crash my car!" than one that says, "This record is great, here's the address to order it." Even that is the smallest, most ridiculous thing, but at least it's some degree of personality or a little bit of extra thought, and I think that's what's lacking in music zines.
Jill: With that, speaking of personality, I think we should address the material aspect of fanzines and how so much is added to the content by the way they're laid out, the cut and paste. Or even if you do part of it on computer just, by having something permanent in your hands that you can look at, really, it comes across in a much different way than staring at a glowing screen.
Dave: Being someone that's doing the zine, the actual act of cutting and pasting and laying out and that sort of thing is something that's really special to me and it's weird that that's probably lost on anyone who's looking at a computer screen instead.
Stuart: And also, it's something that's being eradicated from our culture in general-the idea that you can do something yourself without using Windows or Microsoft or whatever. Well, I use Microsoft to write my zine, so I don't know what I'm talking about. I agree that the whole idea of webzines is just a farce.
Dave: I think it was put best in a recent *MRR* interview with *Artcore* fanzine: "Webzines? What's that? Zines are made of paper, I don't know what a webzine is."
Stefan: For it to be a zine there needs to be some sort of material that you can hold. It's something that you did and-
Stuart: We're in the ABC No Rio Zine Library, and this wouldn't exist if there were only webzines.
Dave: There's a computer over there, so that's the webzine library.
Stefan: I just think a zine is something that you put a lot of work into and that there's a lot of passion behind; to have it just be behind some screen doesn't seem like you put anything into it. Doing the whole cut and paste, doing it yourself is just like having a punk rock ethic, and saying that you're gonna do it yourself and that you don't care if that's not what other people are doing and-
Stuart: Preach on!
Stefan: And then the end result is something you can hold and look at later on and still say

you did this and it's still special and-
Stuart: Or, "I can't believe I wrote that."
Stefan: If you just put it on the internet, you don't have anything. The website goes down and that's it, it's done.
Stuart: I think you're totally right that it goes to the heart of what is punk rock and how we choose to define punk rock. When you were saying that, I was reminded of something that Wedge and Tony were saying about the Nine Shocks Terror record-analog sound comes out in waves, not in ones and zeros, and what you just said corresponds. What we're doing with zines is something that's passionate and it's really hard to express passion in ones and zeros on a computer screen. No matter how into code writing you are, it's not gonna come across, because the coolest-looking website in the end is probably the most commercial looking one because those two things go hand in hand on the web, whereas in fanzines, the coolest looking fanzines are the ones that have the most personal work and the most passion put into them.
Jill: Even if they don't look cool. I mean, in ten years I'm still gonna have my old *Big City* fanzines that are laid out terribly.

punk zine. Sexuality is a part of life, so it's obviously a part of punk, but I don't see what relevance pornography has to a punk zine.
Dave: Part of having sexuality be taboo is that you can be dumb about sexuality and try and make it be shocking instead of admitting that sexuality exists and is part of the world and talk about it in a regular fashion. It's not such a big deal that you're like, "Look, we have interviews and we have naked girls."
Jill: I think there have been a number of fanzines that have incorporated music and sexuality in a positive way, like *Homocore,* and all those old gay fanzines. I wish there were more of those-lesbian punk rock fanzines.
Stuart: I didn't want to imply that I don't think you can write about sex in your zine, it's a matter of how you frame it. Rock 'n' roll and sex go together, but that zine forces it, so I guess *Horizontal Action* to me is really sterile in the end.
Jill: I don't know what their aim is.
Dave: Should zines be free-are zines your gift to the community or are they a product?
Stefan: I've done free zines before, and when my zine is done I always want to give it out to people. I

Stuart: Yeah, but that's cool, too.
Jill: Even if Joe Domino saves his files, I'm not gonna be looking at *Blank Generation* in ten years.
Dave: There's something that can't be recreated on the web. If you ever look at *Sic Teen*, Rev. Norb's old fanzine, the pages are completely cluttered and packed with all sorts of crazy information. The sort of genius layout of pure chaos can't happen unless you're doing it on paper and scanning it.
Jill: I wanted to talk about that zine, y'know, the porn one. I've erased its name from my memory.
Stuart: *Horizontal Action.* Let's all just say a big fuck you to *Horizontal Action.* This is something that's relevant. I think what you do when you give out a zine is you say this is my idea, or this is my interpretation of punk and this is how I choose to define the punk scene, and by doing that you're also defining it for the person who's receiving it.
Rob: It's like what you said, when you put out a zine you're putting yourself out there, and you're saying this is how I feel. As far as I'm concerned, if it's a punk zine it's either made by a punk about punk or it's made by a punk and it's about whatever. That's what constitutes a

ROB SAYS:
"AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED IF IT'S A PUNK ZINE IT'S... MADE BY A PUNK ABOUT PUNK OR IT'S MADE BY A PUNK AND IT'S ABOUT WHATEVER. THAT'S WHAT CONSTITUTES A PUNK ZINE."

game of the arseholes TRASH FACTION

$1 / $2ppd / ¥500

don't feel the need to get any compensation for it, but for me, at least, putting out a zine pretty much drains all my money, so I almost feel like I have to charge people, even though I don't want to.

Jill: I think the aim for zines is to break even, and how you get to that point is a matter of personal experience. I work in a copy center or I scam zines from Kinko's, so I've almost always given mine out for free, but if you need to charge a buck or two or three to get your words out to people, I think that's fine. I'm very willing to pay that much to read someone's words.

Dave: I always want to charge for zines, but people don't want to pay for them. The thing that's sad is that zines aren't records-people don't treat them as if they're a valid form of communication the same way.

Jill: You shouldn't totally generalize there, a lot of people-

Dave: I know that…all *your* friends will pay, but all my friends don't. I mean, people will readily buy $800 worth of merchandise from Tragedy at ABC, but they won't spend a dollar on *Game of the Arseholes*, and that puts the person writing the zine into a situation where if they want to break even, it's harder.

Rob: It's just a reflection of the majority of people's level of interest. Plenty of people wanna put on a record and rock out, but how many want to go home and read someone's really thoughtful ideas about the music they just listened to? The whole thing about charging is this Catch-22 because you want to give it away for free, but when you do people take it only because it's free not because they're interested. In a way, by charging, you're better reaching the people you're writing for because those are the people who seek it out. I don't write with the intention of converting anyone; I'm not on a mission. I don't see this as some sort of conquest where I've gotta write about Raped Ass so that everyone at the show will read the zine and go get the record. I don't care about that, but I just wanna write it and if someone reads it and they don't know what it is and they're interested in it then cool, but mostly I'm writing it for the people like me who are still tearing their hair out every time they listen to it.

Stuart: When we get zines, we all want to pay for them because we appreciate them, and we all would like to give our zines away but there are unfortunate economic realities that we have to deal with. I think part of the reason that people aren't willing to buy zines is that there have been a lot of really crappy zines.

Stefan: When I did my first zine, I charged 50 cents for it and I asked a kid if he wanted to buy it. He said to me, "Oh, I don't buy those anymore," referring to zines in general. He assumed that all zines were shitty and that he didn't want to read them. I just think that's pretty sad because there's a lot of good zines out there that are very much worth paying for.

Dave: Three to one, zines I get go in the garbage as opposed to the save pile. Should anyone go out and do a zine?

Jill: Me too, but I think anyone should do one. I think the more zines there are the better. Once someone starts they'll just get better. There aren't that many zines out.

Stuart: The zine review section shrinks every month.

Jill: So I encourage everyone to do one, whether it's good or bad, it'll only get better.

Dave: Should the first step be to do a zine, or should the first step be to have something inside you that you need to write about, and then your medium is the zine?

Rob: I think the second one facilitates the first, that's why I started writing a zine.

Dave: But I think for a lot of people it's the reverse.

Stuart: I think it was the reverse for me when I first started to do a zine when I was in high school. I very keenly understood, "Hey I can do this, too," and so I did. I don't think I really contributed much to the world of zines by doing that.

Jill: And look what you've become.

Stuart: Yeah, so stick with it, and in a few years, kids, you'll be just like me!

Dave: So if you wanna have some respect in a few years, don't write a zine.

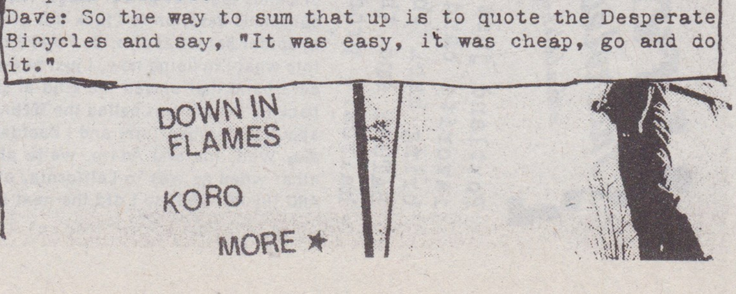
Jill: That's a good question. I don't know. I find it hard to imagine someone being like "I wanna write a zine, but I don't know what I want to write about."

Dave: It's the same thing with bands-most people are like "I wanna be in a band," but they don't know what they want their band to be about and that's why they sound confused.

Jill: I think you need some sort of passion. I want passion; I want blood.

Stuart: Yeah, passion is severely lacking in American culture, so let's take a stance in opposition to that, as punk rockers.

Dave: So the way to sum that up is to quote the Desperate Bicycles and say, "It was easy, it was cheap, go and do it."



Exploding Hearts

Interview by Nate

with a little help from Bobby M.

Portland just got a whole lot cooler. Meet the EXPLODING HEARTS, your new favorite band. Power pop with heavy doses of both power and pop, they bring back the heyday of Bomp records and acts like the ZEROS, STIV BATORS and the FLAMIN' GROOVIES, but with even more attitude, hooks and haircare products. Break out your white denim Levis and get ready.

MRR: Who are you and what brand of instrument do you play?

Terry: I'm Terry Six. I play Adam's 330 Rickenbacker.

Adam: I'm Adam and I play a Mosrite guitar and a Marshall amp.

Matt: I'm Matt and I play a Rickenbacker bass.

Kid: I'm Kid Killer, I play drums.

MRR: How you can afford such nice equipment?

All: (confused, then shocked, then uncontrollable laughter ensues)

Kid: Well, Dirtnap sends us checks for, like, sixty fuckin' grand every two weeks. They're fucking cool.

Matt: I'm sponsored by Crate. Actually, I stole my cabinet from some guy Kid used to live with. The head I have I bought at some dude's yard sale for $35. But you guys don't have any equipment, do you?

Kid: No.

Terry: I bought my cabinet fair and square for fifty bucks.

Adam: I have a Marshall head that I bought from a hippy dude.

Matt: I was involved in a shady deal with a '68 Dodge Dart. That's how I got my bass.

Kid: I've had a drum set that belonged to Ben (Ex-Real Pills) for two years now. I finally gave him money for it a month ago.

MRR: So how did you guys meet? I know Kid and Adam were both in the SPIDER BABIES, but what made you guys say "fuck this swanky garage shit, I'm going to get pretty and play some wussy power pop"?

Adam: We all met in high school, C.E. Mason-it was this school for retards and pregnant girlies. Kid and I were the first ones to start playing together. Man, we were, like, 15. We've been in a bunch of bands together (Silver Kings, FU, bed pans, Coco Cobra and the Killers), and as far as making a conscious decision to "fuck this swanky garage bullshit". I had about as much "creative control" in Spider Babies as this: Do I make my bass sound like a fart or like the Ramones? I've always been into what I'm doing now, I just never found anybody else who was into it. So I said fuck it and started a band that played the kind of stuff I wanted to play. In fact, the original HEARTS line-up was back in '98 and was called the TEENAGE FACES, but then we disbanded and we all did other shit until about 2001, when Terry and I decided it was time to destroy all that crap left over from the 90s.

Terry: Well, me and Adam, we're playing future EXPLODING HEARTS songs over the phone to each other when he was in California, and that's how I got into it. I figured I couldn't just join EDDIE AND THE HOT RODS so I did the next best thing.

MRR: How did you guys meet King Louie?

Adam: I met Louie outside of Dino's (the lowest of all strip clubs). I was skating by and he kept yelling at me so I stopped and we just started chatting about the PERSUADERS and SPIDER BABIES. Then I had a beer (or 12) with him, and the rest is history.

Terry: I met Louie when he was working the Ferris Wheel at Oaks Park. He got us free ride bracelets! It was the first and only time they told us we were too wasted to go on rides.

Adam: You know, the second time I ever hung out with Louie, he picked me up in Choo-Choo's car, this nice, white Oldsmobile. And he's like, "Hey man, you wanna come drive around in this car?" So I get in and he opens up two 24-ouncers of Pabst and gives me one. Then he goes, "Hey man, check this out. I wanna join your band. Check this out. I wrote this song for THE PENDLETONS but that guy Matt was all garage and didn't want to play it." So he's driving, and he sets his beer on the dash, and takes his hands off the steering wheel, and starts using his hands for drums and his voice for guitar and goes, "I'm a pretender man! Hey man! I'm a pretender at the game of love! Man!"

Kid: I guarantee you that 85% of the people reading this thing right now have a Louie story that's just like that.

Adam: Except they were too stupid to turn it into a hit song.

MRR: Are you guys going to be adding another keyboard player since Louie is gone?

All: FUCK NO.

Adam: Not unless they're Cajun and fuck their cousin.

Kid: I'm not totally adverse to playing another show with Louie, though.

Terry: No, not at all.

Adam: I would totally do it.

Matt: We wouldn't plug him in though.

Adam: (in Louie's voice) "Man, that was the best show I ever played! I wasn't plugged in, and I know this, but."

MRR: What's the drummer situation? Why is Kid leaving and who's replacing him?

Adam: Well, Kid just hasn't been into being in the EXPLODING HEARTS for a long time and he's been helping us out, playing shows with us still, so that's cool, I guess. I don't know what the fuck he plans on doing now. And as far as a new drummer goes, we found one a couple weeks ago and we've been practicing every night with him. It's starting to really come together. His name is Kid Cochino and he's full Mexican! He hits hard and has a really huge beat. We are also proud to announce that our band is now half Mexican.

Terry: Kid Killer is turning in his sticks for a cell phone and a day job. Good luck with that.

MRR: What's the deal with Portland and all the great bands we've got right now?

Terry: I have no fucking clue.

Adam: It wasn't that way three years ago.

Kid: It wasn't even that way a year and a half ago.

MRR: It's all recent.

Kid: There was this place called Billy Ray's Neighborhood Dive that had free shows forever. Everybody came out and played all the time.

Adam: A lot of bands played there. It was like the CBGB's of Portland.

Kid: For a while it was.

Adam: It was fucking rad. Free shows and at first it was free beer.

Kid: And everyone who has a side project has their band play too. Shitloads of bands.

Terry: Yeah, ours did (the TRACERS).

MRR: What's up with Dirtnap? What makes them the best label around right now?

Adam: Well, the thing is, Ken is really cool. He has great taste in music, he's a really nice guy, and on top of all that he actually cares about and promotes his bands.

photo by chrystael branchs.

fuck this swanky garage bullshit!

Kid: And he's on it, he has at least two records coming out every month. And they're all fucking killer.

Adam: He parties as much as he works, y'know?

Kid: He came in a time when there were a lot of good bands.

MRR: And no good labels.

Adam: Exactly. Dirtnap is a great label. We're totally excited to be working with them.

MRR: What is Dirtnap putting out with you guys?

Adam: On March 10th, Dirtnap will release the CD version of Guitar Romantic complete with a different insert. He is also putting out our new single "(You left me) Shattered" in April.

MRR: Then what? Aren't you trying to do a split?

Adam: Yeah, we're trying to do a split on Johnny Cat, and we're doing a split with the NEW TOWN ANIMALS (RIP) on Dirtnap. Johnny Cat wants us to find another band to do the split with. I heard something about the FM Knives.?

MRR: What about the Pelado single, did that come out?

Adam: Yeah! We got thirty copies, baby! And they look cool. 100 copies pressed or some shit. Good luck getting one.

MRR: Dirtnap has given the BRIEFS and EPOXIES a huge fucking break. Are your expectations high?

photo by chrystael branchs.

Adam: Our expectations have been about getting high since day one. We want to go on tour and not shower really baaaaad. I think Dirtnap is a great label and has tons of great bands so we'll just have to see.

Terry: I think it all depends on if the BRIEFS become the next Christina Aguilera or not.

MRR: How did you guys get hooked up with Screaming Apple?

Adam: Next question.

MRR: I thought it was a good story about how you met him on tour.

Adam: We didn't meet him, we met his associate, Richie.

Kid: Richie who runs Useless Early Ripes.

Adam: It's a fucking rad magazine. I can't believe we don't have anything comparable to that in the States.

Kid: It's super expensive.

Adam: And rockin'! Yeah, we met that dude in Cologne, at the Underground. We were touring with the SPIDER BABIES at the time.

MRR: Any idea how many copies of the Guitar Romantic LP you've sold so far?

Adam: There's, like, a hundred left. Out of a thousand.

MRR: Since two of you were in the SPIDER BABIES, who were famous for being assholes, did people think the EXPLODING HEARTS would be assholes?

Kid: We were only in the SPIDER BABIES for, like, ten seconds, so I don't think a lot of people, especially in this fucking town, associate us with that band. Although we did play that one really cool show with the SPITS.

Adam: Yeah, that was fun, but it was always Kevin's thing. I only wrote one song in the band, "Your New Boyfriend". Kid and I were in the SPIDER BABIES for about a year. We got to record a single that never came out with Steve Baise from the DEVIL DOGS. Get Hip paid for it, but they never put it out. And we recorded Ten Inches Of Terror, that Kenrock put out, and we went on an East Coast tour and a European tour.

MRR: You guys put a lot of effort into your look and your live show. Has anyone ever accused you of being all style and no substance?

Adam: Never.

Terry: I don't think I've ever heard that in my life.

Kid: I try to ignore the people on the internet that say that. They only wish that their band's REZILLOS covers were fucking half as good as our originals.

Terry: That should be hi-lighted.

MRR: How come every review of the EXPLODING HEARTS mentions the 80s?

Terry: Not any more, they've gotten hip.

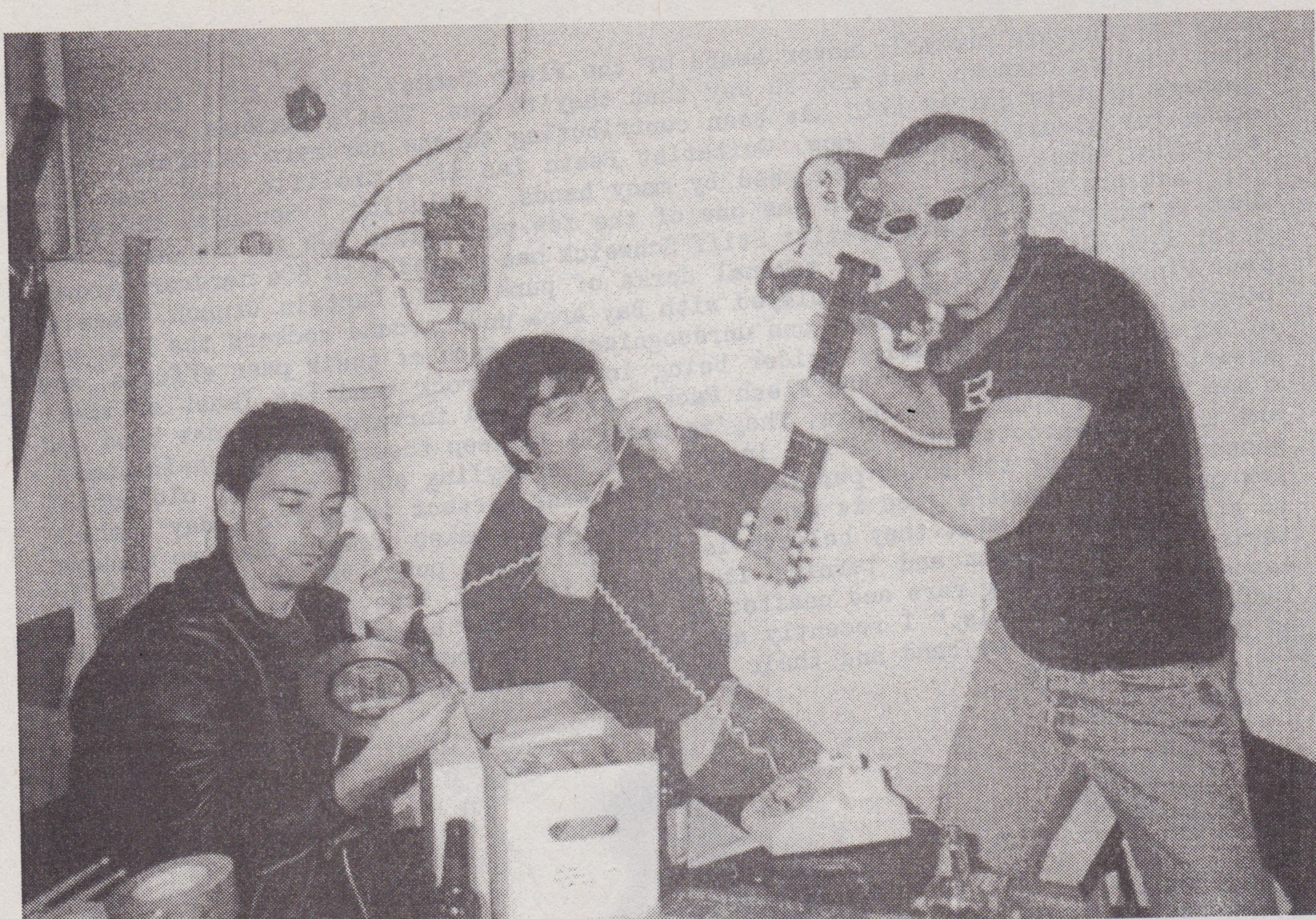
Adam: They've gotten hip to us! Now they all mention Cheap Trick, Bubblegum Hits, getting stoned and backseat loving.

MRR: What records are you guys listening to right now?

Terry: Death Or Glory, the new RIFFS record. It's insane.
Kid: The SPITS, the SMALL FACES.
Adam: A lot of girl group shit and a lot of bubblegum stuff.
MRR: What about your songs, what's the deal with the lyrics? Are they sincere personal shit or are you just feeding the ladies what they wanna hear? Seriously though, you guys have some awesome lyrics, Making Teenage Faces is fucking genius in that simplistic pop song sorta way, but Guitar Romantic has some well thought out and clever lyrics, "Rumors in Town" and "Sleeping Aides and Razor Blades" specifically. What's the deal here? Is this shit straight from the heart or what?
Adam: Well, I don't want to say too much on this subject, but I will say this: "Sleeping Aides" was my personal fuck you anthem for a breakup I had with a live-in girlfriend. I was so happy to have perfectly documented my crappy existence in a motown ripoff song. Everything right down to the razorblades as a self-mutilation reference (it's not about doing coke) and the line about hanging up new posters, everything in that song is just so fucking true it hurts. On the other hand, you have songs like "Boulevard Trash" that open up with lines like "Ain't done chores now for at least a hundred days, don't do the dishes no more I just throw them away." That's my favorite line.
MRR: Who's the chick that sings back ups on "Thorns and Roses"? Is she single?
Terry: Her name is Jessica, she fucking rules! And she can outparty us sometimes... and for once she actually has a boyfriend.
Adam: Yeah, his name is Jack and he used to be in the RIFFS. Jessica and I met through our love of Josie Cotton and drinking, so it was just a natural progression to have her sing on our record. She is also getting the "I'm a Pretender" tattoo, like the one I got.
MRR: Every time I see TEENAGE HEAD's Frantic City I think it's Guitar Romantic. Did you do this on purpose?
Adam: I guess I kinda did rip off the whole tri-tone picture thing, huh? Oh well, fuck them.
MRR: Tell me about the New Years' show with the MAKERS.
Terry: I got wasted. It was awesome.
Adam: I got wasted too, it was awesome. And the MAKERS look like Prince and Lenny Kravitz put in a wimp blender.
Kid: I tried to hate them, but I couldn't.
Adam: Yeah, they had their moments.
Kid: I didn't think they were as bad as I thought they'd be.
Adam: They show off their nipples a lot. We have pictures of their butts too. And their tambourine with a picture of a praying butt on it.
MRR: How did you guys end up on Art Alexakis' radio show?
Kid: Wookie, Wookie!
Adam: I got woken up by a call from this dude named Wookie one day. He asked if we wanted to be on Art's radio show.
Kid: And Adam goes, "What do we get out of it?"
Adam: Well, yeah, but then he said we'd have to play an acoustic song. And I said no. So he fucking wakes me up the very next day, and I said yeah.
MRR: Was Art a dipshit?
Adam: Yeah. He got schooled by Ted (the singer of the DISKORDS, and a good friend), who is 14, about who wrote Chinese Rocks. Apparently in Art's world Joey Ramone wrote it. I mean, the guy really has no concept of good music.
Adam: The first thing he said when I got in there was, "So, looks like you're working on some tats, brah?" And I said, "Yeah, I see you got some Power Puff Girls tattoos on your arm, brah."
Kid: Everclear is the squarest band from Portland, ever.
Matt: No band can be more square than the band that has a member who wears a Trailblazers jersey in their video.
Kid: And raps about Led Zeppelin!
MRR: Adam, what's the deal with the mullet? Do the ladies love the mullet?
Terry: Ladies do love the mullet, but it can't just be any mullet-it has to be a really good mullet.
Adam: I have two points. One: The word "mullet" was invented in the 90s (just like "Nsync" and "xtreme sports, brah") so therefore I completely absolve myself from having to answer this stupid question, and I'm offended you asked. Fuck you. Two: it's cold in Oregon! It helps keep my neck warm!
MRR: Adam, tell me the story about meeting Ike Turner.
Adam: My mom recently met the dude and became friends with him. I told her I was a fan and wanted to meet him, so she called him up, and he said, "Ahh! Shit, yeah! He can come on over! I'll teach him a thing or two! Shit!" Then I went over and fuckin' played guitar with him, and it was really cool!
MRR: Did he teach you a thing or two?
Adam: Fuck yeah he did. He totally did. Now that I think about it, I might have actually sold him my soul. Then he showed me the whole Keith Richards tuning thing.
Terry: Those guys at the Waterfront Blues Festival, they let us backstage. They knew us by word of mouth.
Adam: Well, I knew the name of Ike's girlfriend, and I asked for her and they let us through. He had a wig on the chick! She looked like Tina, it was rad. He's a dirty old motherfucker too.
Terry: When he played at the Blues Fest, it was all recorded live and on the radio. And he was like, "Ahh! Suck that thing!"
Adam: Yeah, he was going nuts! "Suck it down! Owww!" Then he played his own version of "Tequila". We thought it was going to be "I Want Candy".
MRR: Bobby Manic wants me to ask how you got to kiss Roxy Epoxy.
Adam: Yeah, I think the question should be rephrased to ask how she got to kiss me.
Terry: She's short too.
MRR: Who's the best power-pop band of all time?
Kid: Us.
MRR: Good answer. Anything you guys want to add?
Adam: Don't buy anything from Jackpot Records. They don't support local bands for shit. They're a bunch of pontsy, white-belt-wearing, expensive-brewed-beer dicks. And they won't carry our records.
Kid: The Dirtnap bands and the Vinyl Warning bands are the best bands in the country.
All: Yeah, definitely.
MRR: What is the EXPLODING HEARTS' drink of choice?
Adam: Extra spicy Bloody Mary (in a pint glass) and whiskey on the rocks
Terry: Gin and Tonics in pint glasses and Pabst.
Matt: Do you guys want to get stoned?
MRR: You guys want to give shout outs or props?
Adam: No. But I do want to say hi to all the cool people and bands we've met in the last year. And hi to Louie and Choo-Choo-I hope you're having fun in Nashville!
MRR: How many times have you guys gotten laid or offered drugs strictly because you're in the EXPLODING HEARTS?
Matt: Enough times to justify wearing pink pants.

Exploding Hearts

Many of you have probably never heard of the Flesh Packs. It would be fair to say that they're unknown, but not to say that they're new. That's because each of the members of this quirky trio has been contributing to the northern California punk scene for almost 20 years now. Guitarist Peein Ian is a prolific punk rock photographer whose work has been used by many bands, including 7 Seconds, Operation Ivy, and the Ramones. He also was one of the few punk radio DJs in the Santa Cruz area in the 80s. Drummer/vocalist Stiff Schweick has played with 80s hardcore groups Alter Ego, MK-ULTRA, and the seminal dorks of punk rock, Captain Crunch. Bassist Four Fingered Frank, has also played with Bay Area underground rockers the Flu, and Starla City. Though they have gone unrecognized for much of their past efforts, and at an age when many would consider being in a punk rock band the least of their priorities, the members of the Flesh Packs have surged forward with a new band and a new release, Four Zippy Songs. They've managed to keep their hunger, their humor, and their grassroots sense of DIY intact. They're styling songs with an old school sound, but making the songs pertinent with an ever-present irony for today's shallow principles (what's good is wrong, and what's bad makes money). They've managed to stay focused on what they believe is important about punk, "a snide pleasure in taking the mainstream and turning it against itself," "the feeling that you've tapped into something rare and unaffected," and "somehow being able to laugh at how ludicrous the world is." I recently sat down with the band at their garage studio to talk about them as band and their new record. Interview by Mischelle Merritt.



MRR: What does Flesh Packs mean?

Frank: Well, Flesh Packs is really ah, I think, is a response to who humans actually pretend to be. You know, we sort of pretend that we're above the animal kingdom, and some people pretend like they're sort of divine, when really, you know, all we are is highly pressurized packets of flesh roaming the landscape, trying to survive just the way any other life form is.

MRR: Do you think we should end up in the meat dept. in Safeway someday?

Frank: I think we're about at the level of the meat dept. in Safeway.

Schweick: Which also ties into the meaning of Flesh Packs on the consumer-side of things, the way the media is used to sell you products, saying your life will be better if you buy our brand, or only young cutting edge people buy this brand; they appeal to peoples' desire to want to be anything but average. So they're not just trying to sell you a product, but also a packaged lifestyle, and it's defined by their products. So in a sense, Flesh Packs is sort of a metaphor describing that tactic.

MRR: Like a packaged identity.

Schweick: Exactly.

Frank: It (the name) kinda sounds like a wiener too. (all bust up laughing)

MRR: So if Flesh Packs means a packaged identity, aren't you packaging yourselves when you put out a record?

Schweick: We're definitely packaging ourselves. Everybody is. At least we're trying to do it in such a way where we're mocking the construction of a packaged identity itself. The fact that we're using Otter Pops on the cover of our record is making fun of ourselves, like we're just another prepackaged musical group for your listening pleasure. It's sort of saying what it really is.

Ian: We just want you to buy the record. (laughs)

Schweick: Uh oh, It's getting too political for Ian.

MRR: OK. Well then we'll switch up. So you guys are all from different bands? I mean, you seem kind of old. I can't believe you guys are just starting. (Schweick laughs)

Ian: Well, Schweick and I were in Captain Crunch and still are. But before that, Schweick was in other bands.

Schweick: Alter Ego and MK-ULTRA.

Ian: Not the art-wanker MK-ULTRA, but the older punk rock MK-ULTRA from Santa Cruz.

Frank: And I've played in lots of bands. Last band I played in before this band was the Flu. I was also playing in another band called Starla City when we were making this record.

MRR: Are these all San Francisco Bay Area bands?

Frank: All Bay Area bands.

Ian: Captain Crunch was originally from Santa Cruz. Back then there was only two bands in Santa Cruz, us and the Swingin' Utters.

MRR: So what do you think is good punk rock?

Frank: Anything, to me, that is counter-cultural and willing to say something that most people won't say.

Schweick: Yeah, it's hard to say. I mean, there's a lot of bands that I really like, that I think are really doing it right. Dillinger Four, I think their album, *vs God*, really kicks ass, and is a really good account of the American condition today. Another group I think is really good is Scared of Chaka. Oh yeah and also, Songs for Emma is another good group.

MRR: What do you think of the music scene in the Bay Area?

Ian: It's a better than when Schweick and I were in Santa Cruz. (laughs)

Schweick: It's like "what music scene in Santa Cruz?" I would say that the music scene here is hard to describe, because there's not as many good venues that you can play at anymore. There used to be a ton of really good places to see punk rock and good alternative shows, but that's kind of disappeared and it's just hard to get shows these days. But the good thing is when you meet other bands at gigs. It seems that bands are nicer to each other now that there are fewer places to play. Everybody seems to be really cool and interested in what you're doing. So I think that's a positive twist on it.

Ian: Yeah, the economics of the city and this whole area, make it hard to have a practice space or to buy equipment or even to operate a venue that puts on shows. [The difficulty of] all of those things are prohibitive to this kind of lifestyle.

MRR: What do you think of commercial versus non-commercial music?

Frank: There's good stuff everywhere. You just have to get out and find it. It's out there. It's kind of hard to know what's commercial and what's not sometimes. We mentioned Dillinger Four. Is that commercial?

Ian: It's got a UPC code on the back of the CD, right here.

Frank: And if so, it's pretty good.

Schweick: I don't think that Dillinger Four are commercial, but there's a lot of bands that try to have that sound that are. I mean, there's the blatant commercialism, like all the stupid boy bands, and they're pre-packaged and mass-marketed music created for a specific demographic. But even in the underground scene, it's hard to tell what's commercial and isn't, and how big the label is. Where to do you even draw the line. Is a label that has 20 bands on it on the border of being commercial?

Ian: Well, all the major labels bought many of the small labels, so sometimes it's hard to tell. You think you're buying a record on a small label, but they' re owned by a major label. In other words, the people in the band are getting about a nickel for every disk you bought.
Schweick: I saw a billboard in Oakland advertising the Transplants record, and those guys are supposed to be punk rockers. I thought it was self-defeating. I don't think punk should be advertised in mainstream media. Would you want your band on the side of bus? When are the Time/Life collections of punk rock's greatest hits coming out?
Frank: Basically, if you're on the side of a bus, you're not punk rock.
Schweick: I think commercial music is the lowest common denominator, and I'm more interested in stuff that people are making themselves in their bedrooms or their garages.
Ian: Yeah, there are a lot of good bands. Two bands kind of like us are Head from Seattle and Rat Fink from New Hampshire. They're both old guys like us and you won't see any UPC code on their records 'cause they're doing it themselves too. A few of the commercial bands are good. I won't not listen to a record just because it's on a major label. But I will try not to pay for it. (all laugh) But seriously, that's why the record companies are having such difficulty, because no one wants to pay $16 for a CD when you can download and print one out on your computer for free. And if you bought that record on a major label, you're not supporting the artist, because they only get a nickel of the $16 and some fat guys in suits get the rest.
Schweick: Yeah... fuck corporate music.
Ian: We make about a nickel per record too, but at least our records are a lot cheaper.
Schweick: I think we're breaking even on ours. Well, we're not making any money, that's for sure. That's not the point.
MRR: What is the point?
Schweick: The point is to be creative and to make something cool. It's freedom of expression and to make something that you like without compromising your values.
MRR: So in your song, "Short-Sighted ", you say, "It's so easy to fall for the limelight parade, but we don't have to succumb to the monsters we've made. "Is that what you're getting at?
Schweick: That's kinda getting back to that thing about commercialism and stuff like that. It seems there's this whole manufactured identity of fame and riches and how that's supposed to be the best life you could ever have. I just think it's total bullshit; I think that fame is for chumps. And I think that people want to be famous, because they think that it gives them some sort of power. But actually it seems that the deeper they get into that whole game of fame and riches, it actually makes them powerless. They are at the mercy of this popularity contest held by the media. So I just think that it's a bunch of shit. The whole idea of that lyric is to recognize that it's just a construction and to not buy into it.
Frank: Having no experience with fame myself, I wouldn't really know.(laughs)
MRR: So you guys then all still work full-time.
Ian: I think that all of us have, at some point, made the decision that we would rather work and keep music as a hobby. At least at my job, a lot of people who I work with probably consider it a career. I just basically work there so I can afford to do my hobbies, and because of that, our music is uncompromised. We don't have to answer to anybody.
Schweick: And plus it's pretty damn impossible to survive in the Bay Area as a musician. How could you not have a job at some point and then try to play gigs and buy equipment or make records and stuff. So, we definitely have to work in order to support this, but it's totally worth it. It's kind of a necessary evil in order to make the things that you want to do.
MRR: What are your jobs?
Schweick: You know, I work for the man. (laughs) I basically do visual effects for movies. It affords me some time off to work on my personal projects, and it can be a pretty artistic endeavor at times, so that's sort of how I rationalize it.
Ian: Hey! Frank can actually say he works for a non-profit.
Frank: I work for a not-for-profit managed care organization pushing Medi-Cal for poor people.
Schweick: Sweet! Fucking Robin Hood over here.
Ian: Oh yeah, I work for a for-profit company (laughs) that helps people retire, that helps people save for retirement. Among other things. And it's something that even punk rockers should think about, saving for retirement. (Schweick is laughing) If you think you're going to get by on Social Security alone when you're 65, you're kidding yourself.
MRR: So your song, "Nothing To Live For" sounds kind of depressing. What is that about?
Schweick: Do you need your medication?
Frank: Yes, my medication. That song is really about, uh...well an analogy would be like if the world was an adult man who goes around picking fights with small children, and challenging them to bare-fisted boxing matches. This is the whole world throwing a punch at a small child, a knockout punch that they couldn't really get up from. And it's kinda about (an old buddy?) who didn't really get up after the punch was thrown.
Schweick: So wait a minute. So you're saying that the world has punched out a kid? And then...
Ian: That's his other song.
Frank: That's the other song, yes. There's a lot of violence in these songs. (sarcasm) It's just about how the world can be a really hectic place and a sort of uncompromising place, and some people get involved in what the world has to offer at a pretty early age, and they don't know how to fight that. They don't have the tools.
Schweick: And what kind of medication are you on?
Frank: Zoloft and Prozac and Viagra.
MRR: So you describe yourselves as "Old School." What does that mean?
Ian: I think it just means that we're old.
Schweick: We're fucking old. (laughs) OK, we're not ancient.
Ian: Our equipment is old too.
Schweick: I think it just means that we're mostly influenced by the late 70s/early 80s style of punk rock we were definitely raised with: the Ramones, Stiff Little Fingers, the Buzzcocks, and that sort of stuff. It has a huge influence in music that we make.
Ian: I like the stuff that you listen to when you're in high school. And the effect it has on you.
Schweick: It screws you up for life.
MRR: How did you guys make your record?
Ian: We recorded it at our house, with a half-inch 8-track machine that we bought from the classified ads for less money than it would have cost to go to the studio. And the good thing about that is that we had more control over the whole process.
Schweick: Yeah, the whole thing was, we wrote, played, recorded, did the artwork for all of our records, um, and we did everything short of mastering the plates, and pressing the vinyl ourselves.
Ian: For the next record, we're gonna press them ourselves on Soy Vinyl. (laughs)
MRR: So do you have any comments about the current political climate?
Frank: Sad.
Ian: It's very sad.
Schweick: It just seems there's not enough steam behind the anti-war movement, right now. I'm glad people are protesting it, but there doesn't seem like there's as much of an outcry as there should be.
Frank: Well, specifically about what's going on right now. People don't really seem to have a lot of insight into what's actually going on. I think people are... they don't really trust the government, and they don't have the information that they need in order to make decisions, you know. There's not a whole lot of information out there. A lot of people don't know where to find it, if it is out there.
MRR: Not like it's out there.
Schweick: That's the thing....
Frank: No, it is out there. In America, we have freedom of the press. It's there. There are market forces that censor some of the information we could be getting, but there's tons of alternative press out there. It's just a matter of people knowing about it.
Ian: Yeah, the internet really has the potential to change how people think about the country, the government, etc. But, you know, it could take some time.
Schweick: Plus, as far as the current political climate, Frank said something I thought was pretty pertinent. He said, "There's no love in politics." I agree. I just think that government has lost the plot completely. The most important thing to the constituency of this country is life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Or trying to have a good life, your family, and enjoying yourself while you're here. That doesn't call for killing people so that you can have gas for your fuckin' car, and, you know, things like that. So I just think that it's all about business, and there's no passion for the people, and people need to be first.
Frank: And the sad thing or the confusing part for people, including me, is there's a whole group of people out there who get paid to think about politics all day long. It's their jobs. It's what they do. And, being outside of that world, we can only deal with the information that we have. I don't get paid all day long to think about these things. And therefore, I don't even have all of the information I would need in order to make a really educated decision about something. It's very hard to say, although I can say, because I believe in non-violence at all costs, we shouldn't be going to war, we just shouldn't be 'cause it's not right. It's not OK to just go kill people for any reason. On the other side of that, I really don't know what's going on, and I don't think a lot of people do. I see it as the US is in it for the oil. But that's just one of many things that few people know for sure.
Ian: Yeah, we definitely need to be able to produce alternative energy sources, so that we don't have foreign oil. But until then, if people still want to buy their SUVs for $30,000, that just means that those of us who don't waste our money on SUVs can buy more used music equipment.
Schweick: And make more punk rock.

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BLACKLIST BRIGADE

The Blacklist Brigade hails from London, England. They play raw, simple punk rock with a heavy pirate influence. They also run *No Front Teeth* zine with some other guys, as well as NFT Records.

MRR: Describe The Blacklist Brigade

Tommy: Raw punk rock with a pirate edge.

Vinny-Jack: Yeah, we're basically really raw, rough pirate rock and roll with nothing added. If we make mistakes, we make mistakes it's real and it's fun. Bringing back the true punk rock spirit. We're definitely unrefined.

Sam: Yeah, grimy, unfiltered, punk rock.

MRR: You have an EP out. Tell me about that.

Vinny-Jack: Yeah, it's called *The Brethren Of The Coast* and it's on NFT Records. It's a testimony to our unprocessed approach to rock and roll.

Tommy: Yeah, it's such a fucking raw release just a case of a practice or two, and then bang we recorded it. I think it's varied enough for people to listen to it a couple of times and still think it's fresh.

Sam: It's pirate punk through and through.

MRR: Where did you record it and how long did it take?

Tommy: We recorded under really low-budget conditions. It was completely DIY, so we were able to record it in this room/barn above our mate's garage in this back alley in Stroud Green, North London. I really enjoyed the whole deal.

Sam: We called it The Chicken Coup! It only took about five days in the studio to record, but those days were spread over about two months.

Vinny-Jack: Our friend Porter recorded it all for us on his eight track recorder and we had to stop every now and then, waiting until all the noise from the cars in the garage below had stopped. You're getting the picture of the type of conditions it was recorded in!

MRR: You have just released a split with the Inverted Nines, how did that come about?

Vinny-Jack: Well, we wanted the split to be one English band and one American band and we all instantly came up with the Inverted Nines. We included them on the first No Front Teeth comp we put out earlier this year, so I just called Chris up, and he was totally cool with the idea. It's a fucking great release! They truly run the show, but our tunes are good too!

MRR: What are The Blacklist Brigade's songs about? Give me an example of your lyrics...

Vinny-Jack: In a general sense, they are all about pirates. "Pleasure, Liberty and Power" is mainly about the Pirate Bartholomew Roberts the chorus says A.B.H. and A.M.H., which is what he had written on his flag, it meant a Barbadian's head and a Martinican's head, referring to the islands of Barbados and Martinique. He had a skeleton standing on their skulls on the flag.

Tommy: The lyrics are just pirate tales simply because we wanted a different edge, we thought we'd be a bit more original. Personally, I've never been that into feeling the lyrics, most of the bands I like talk about shit that doesn't relate to me, but that's cool because I love the music, and for me that is the be all and end all.

Vinny-Jack: Let's see, let me think for a minute of some of our better lyrics! OK. "Burn the thieves alive with their ill-gotten gains, stolen ropes and sails and 10, 000 men in main, the Battle of Lepanto / Christian victory, the Christian slaves turned Turk and joined the enemy," that's from the song "Join the Enemy," which is about slaves working really hard on plantations and joining pirates to have a better life; this happened a lot. They are all about shit like that, you know. Also that song's got some other lyrics I really like in it because they're an actual quote by a pirate called John Ward. They go, "When the sea was our empire, where we robbed at will, we could sing, swear, drink and kill." That's fucking cool, they even rhyme!

MRR: Why are you a pirate punk band, is it a gimmick?

Vinny-Jack: No it's not a gimmick. We have real fun doing this, but we're not into this funny punk rock shit like Guttermouth or the Vandals. I love pirates, I'm fascinated by their history and that's all we're putting in our songs. It's basically just story telling, like in country music. I love listening to country songs about hobos, murderers, cheats, liars, you know, and we're just trying to bring that element into punk. It's like a novel, but with music. I've learned so much stuff through music because it's a medium I love and have a passion for. And the songs are long enough to tell a story, but short enough not to drone on.

Tommy: Yes and no. I mean Vinny and I have pirate roots. My mother was half pirate and was born on the shores of Tortuga, so I guess that gives me some legitimate pirate status. As for Sam, he's just on board for the ride. I've heard his dad was a buccaneer in his formative years Swine.

MRR: What aspect of punk rock appeals to you the most?

Tommy: I don't know. I guess just the style it has and the way it makes me feel.

Vinny-Jack: I think it's the fact that it's kind of like one huge family and it's so unpretentious. It seems, and we've found this with our zine *No Front Teeth*, that people are so willing to help out. Most people stick to their word and that's so cool. All the bands we've dealt with, except maybe two or three, have been so great with us and we really appreciate that. That, for me, is what punk rock is all about.

MRR: Tell me about the NFT *Global Hostility* compilation that you just released.

Vinny-Jack: *Global Hostility* is a compilation of true punk rock from all over the world, we've got bands representing Finland, Holland, Israel, Brazil, Japan, Sweden, Estonia, Argentina, Uruguay, USA, Canada, Italy, Portugal, Yugoslavia, Bangladesh, Croatia, Nepal, Scotland, Russia, Germany, Belgium, Czech Republic, *I think that's it!* We're representing England on there, along with The Autonomists and Fruit Cocktail who have an upcoming CD release on NFT Records later this year. We have had some great feedback from that comp and although it was a real headache to put together, we are really proud of it.

MRR: Tell me about *Suburban Life Sentence*, the first NFT compilation.

Vinny-Jack: That came out in May or something like that and it's been selling really well. It's got a load of bands on it like the US Bombs, Smogtown, the Boils, the Rogues, the Hunns, the Decline, the Inverted Nines, the Restarts, Penalty Box, Red Flag 77, the Motherfuckers, Very Metal,

Pinkerton Thugs, Candysnatchers, the Damaged, Jim Dandy, the Smalltown Criminals (from Germany), Weekend Bowlers, Nauzia (from Brazil), the Showcase Showdown and a few more too. Oh yeah, the Jumpin Landmines who are fucking great and also our other band Low Score City, we did the title track on that comp.

MRR: So you're in two bands?

Vinny-Jack: Yeah, all three of us are in Low Score City, along with Jon from NFT and our friend Dan. It's a bigger band with two guitar players. But we're kind of on hold at the moment due to everyone being busy at different times. It's real hard to get five people to be somewhere at any given time. It's hard enough with just three.

MRR: Didn't the Blacklist Brigade start off as a side project to Low Score City?

Sam: Yeah, that's right. Vinny and I used to joke about being in a pirate punk band. One day Tommy and he wrote a couple of songs and we started playing. I didn't think we would ever get our act together. We are very different to Low Score City; we are much more raw.

Vinny-Jack: We were having problems with Low Score City in the sense that it was getting real hard to find the time to practice, due to some members being busier than others. We hadn't had a single practice in about four months.

MRR: Tell me about the Fruit Cocktail release.

Vinny-Jack: Yeah, we are releasing their *Fruit Cocktail vs. Hellcat* CD. It's got guest appearances by Duane Peters, Al Barr, Tim Armstrong, Brad Logan, Jen Johnson and loads more Hellcat artists. It's a very interesting release, because you've got these artists singing and playing stuff that they may not normally do. Like, there's an acoustic track with Al Barr, stuff like that.

MRR: How did you get Duane Peters to say that shit on Petticoat Girls on the split?

Vinny-Jack: We did an interview with him in July for *No Front Teeth* and we just asked him to do it, and he was cool with it. We just recorded them right there in Highbury! That's what's so cool about Duane; he's up for anything. He's not pretentious in any way, he's a real "can do" guy. That's a brilliant quality that you don't come across too often in the music scene.

I got laid off my old job making plaster casts of teeth and painting teeth to match people's existing teeth color a few months ago, but that job sucked anyways!

MRR: Weren't Disaster going to do a vinyl version of *Suburban Life Sentence*?

Vinny-Jack: Well, there was talk of that, but Disaster has been really busy this year. They have been signing new bands like the Briggs, The Discontent and the Ruiners. They have released loads of albums this year the live Bombs one, Kings Of Nuthin', the *Old Skars* comp, the new Hunns one (which is fucking amazing!), the Sign Offs and the *Concrete Waves* comp too. They've been really, really busy and obviously lots of money has gone into doing, distributing and promoting all those releases. We'll just wait and see what happens. Obviously it would be out of this world for it to come out through Disaster on vinyl! Disaster have been really great with us right from the start of NFT when we were just a paper zine, you know, they were cool with us using the Bombs, Hunns and Smogtown tracks on the comp...that's fucking cool.

MRR: What bands are you influenced by?

Vinny-Jack: Definitely Reagan Youth, JFA, the Clash, Fakes, Stitches, Bombs, not that we really sound like any of these bands.

Tommy: Without a doubt, the Hunns, I don't know there's a lot of good shit out there.

MRR: Do any of you have jobs?

Tommy: Not at the moment.

Sam: I'm just about to quit my job as a postroom worker to earn a living making flightcases.

Vinny-Jack: I work in New Wave Tattoo Studio right near where I live. I got laid off my old job making plaster casts of teeth and painting teeth to match people's existing teeth color a few months ago, but that job sucked anyways!

MRR: What was the first show you went to that blew you away, and how old were you?

Vinny-Jack: That would have to be when I was about twelve. I went to see the Pogues with Sam. It was when Joe Strummer was singing for them, then, at the end of the show Shane McGowan came on and sang a set with them, which was obviously cool as fuck. Then to top it off, the Clash came on and played "I fought The Law." The crowd was fucking great, the show was amazing, a great night.

Sam: Yeah, that was fucking sweet. I think that ranks number one with me too, everyone was so fucking hammered.

Tommy: The Dropkick Murphys at the Highbury Garage in London. It was the first time I'd seen them and they fucking tore the place apart. They had the whole bagpipe intro to begin with and then ripped into "Cadence to Arms" from *Do or Die*. The whole place just kicked off, plus the US Bombs and the Bombshell Rocks supported, so the whole show was very cool.

MRR: What's in your stereo at the moment?

Tommy: The Hunns.

Vinny-Jack: The Distraction, Kings Of Nuthin', The Ritchie Whites.

Sam: Tenor Saw.

The Blacklist Brigade/No Front Teeth/NFT Records, PO Box 27070, London, N2 9ZP, UK
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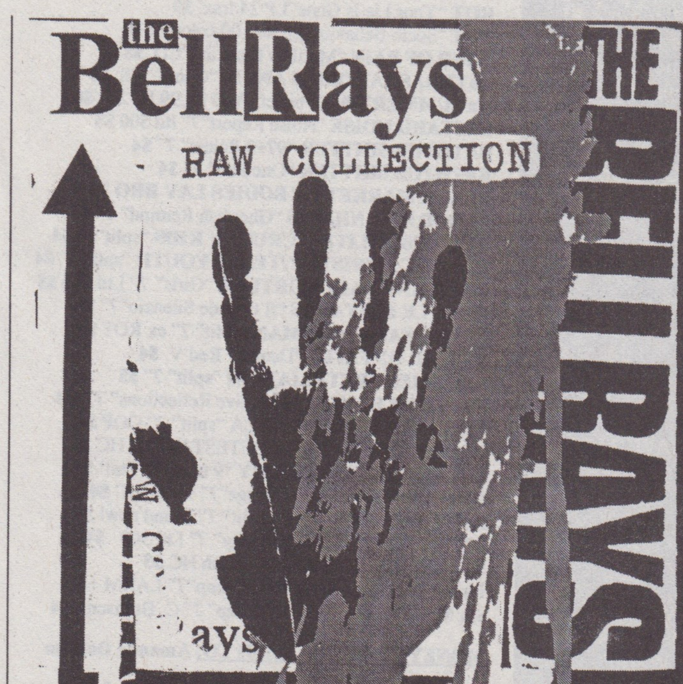

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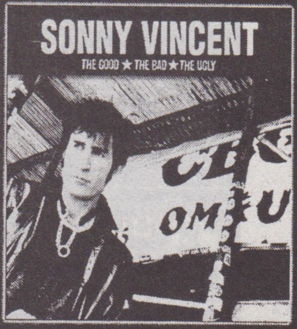

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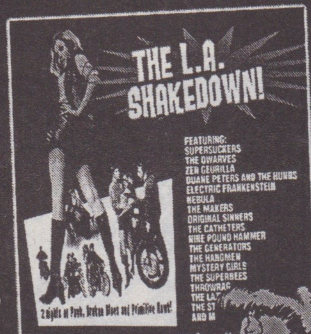

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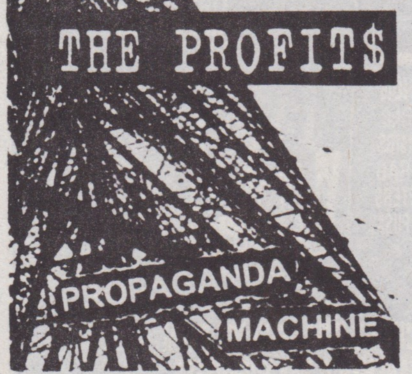

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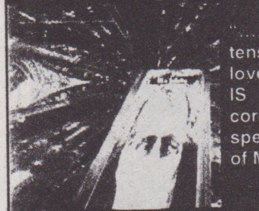

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BOOKS

Redefining Our Relationships: Guidelines for Responsible Open Relationships
Wendy-O Matik
93 pages • $12.00
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"Some relationship scenarios are often feared and avoided by even the most adventurous individuals and couples. In this lies our greatest challenge—how do we construct new relationship models that will survive the test of time and love? There is no guarantee that a situation might work itself out for the best, but there is inherent truth and great wisdom from even the most painful of consequences. I ask you: What truly mind-blowing relationship has ever been safe?"

Wendy-O Matik's latest book, *Redefining Our Relationships: Guidelines for Responsible Open Relationships*, is kind of like the *Cliff's Notes for The Ethical Slut*, Dossie Easton and Catherine A Liszt's guide to infinite sexual possibilities. It's short and simple, concisely written and neatly organized. To be fair, O Matik makes it clear from the start that this book does not set out to challenge cultural paradigms or even discuss the pros and cons of monogamy versus non-monogamy. She simply chooses to write about what she has lived and experienced: 13 successful years in an open relationship. And by my calculations, that just about makes her an expert on the subject.

Because being in a non-monogamous relationship is not easy. Non-monogamy requires learning a whole new set of skills as well as overcoming a lifetime of socialization. It requires some profound changes in how one views relationships and the world in general. Certain conditioned premises must be rejected—for instance, that it is impossible to have more than one intense, emotional relationship at the same time, or that if you really care about someone, you will get jealous about his/her other involvements—and then new ones must be accepted.

The main misconception many people have about open relationships is that there are no boundaries. That you can fuck whomever you want, whenever you want, and it doesn't matter who gets hurt by the process. In reality, nothing could be further from the truth. Open relationships need to have very good boundaries that are clear, strong, and mutually agreed upon. Each individual must be honest with themselves and with their partners, and communicate clearly about feelings, needs, anxieties, and insecurities, including jealousy.

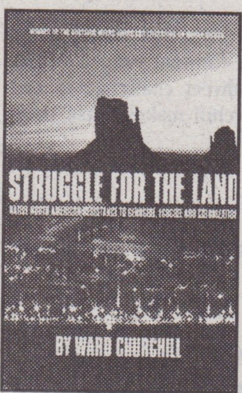
And this is where *Redefining Our Relationships* is most helpful. As O Matik shares her own experiences with us, she offers a guideline of what to expect and provides tips on how to deal with each situation. Starting with questions that need to be answered, such as "What would an ideal relationship be like for me?" then on to the debunking of myths and misconceptions about open relationships, followed by confronting feelings of jealousy, and finally to the importance of setting a solid foundation of trust through introspection and open and honest communication. This is also the time to negotiate your boundaries. Take time to think long and hard about your desires. What do you need? What do you want? What are you comfortable with? What will make you feel safe and supported? And then be assertive and articulate these needs clearly and honestly.

Confronting jealousy has its very own chapter because for many people, this will be their biggest obstacle. O Matik writes, "Establishing trust is the first order of business. Trust entails a commitment to yourself as well as with another person that you both can and will deal with anything that comes along. If you can ride out this storm you are likely to find a strengthening of your commitment through the harder times." Easier said than done. Lucky for us, she also included suggestive strategies on how to manage a jealousy attack: Acknowledge your feelings of jealousy; consider this as an opportunity to understand yourself better; Set aside quality time with yourself, then with your partner or lover to share feelings; describe what you need from your partner for reassurance without resorting to blame or unreasonable ultimatums; remember that you need to love yourself, and last but not least make amends. Always make up with hugs and sincere apologies.

The important point is that she acknowledges that having feelings of jealousy is normal. However, it's how you deal with these feelings that will either make or break your relationships.

Ideally, non-monogamous relationships provide the opportunity to meet all your needs rather than repress and resent whichever needs do not conveniently fit into your primary relationship, enriching the lives of all parties involved and leading to deeper intimacy, love, and satisfaction. But this takes work. And role models.

Wendy-O Matik once wrote, "Amidst a ripened teenage angst of 18 going on 30, I discovered the written word. To write and record my own history and experience became a political activity for me. Being 'punk' had less to do with how many colors my hair went through and everything to do with communication and survival on this planet without losing my mind." At first glance, *Redefining Our Relationships* doesn't seem political at all. But when you consider the fact that O Matik lived in an open relationship for 13 years, successfully and happily, in our oppressive and sex-negative culture, it becomes downright revolutionary.
—Catherine Cook



Struggle for the Land
Ward Churchill
460 pages • $19.95
City Lights • 261 Columbus Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94133

As we know, Argentina is in a major fiscal crisis. Enough so that even the middle class is impoverished, and nearly everyone in the country is affected. How would you feel if the US broke open its piggy bank and just started buying pieces of Argentina? Slowly but surely, we could bring the country back from the brink of collapse and likely have access to some resources (land, mineral, human) that are just not available in North America. Why do you (if you do) think that this would be wrong? Would it be because of national sovereignty, problems with colonization, or the likely origin of Argentina's woes (American foreign policy)? Any reason you could determine why this would be a wrong would also apply for the United States's relationship to its indigenous population. The premise of *Struggle for the Land* is an anti-colonist one; it begins with Columbus and concludes with urani-

um mining in the Black Hills, hydropower generation in the Northwest, and military testing in the Southwest.

Ward Churchill has never separated his roles as commentator from his participation in the struggles about which he speaks. As one of the most visible Native Americans (and arguably the most radical) around today, Ward has pushed the left in general, and radicals specifically, toward dealing with the consequences of native sovereignty as part of their understanding of social change (and its movements).

Struggle for the Land is actually a reprint of the book (first published in 1995 on Common Courage Press) by City Lights. This edition is expanded and includes new essays on the legal doctrines used to justify American occupation, the displacement of native peoples from their land, and Ward's personal vision, "I am Indigenous." Like most of Ward's work, Struggle for the Land is a compilation of essays, and suffers from the disjointed delivery of themes. There is also a sense that a few of Ward's essays (especially "I am Indigenous") are getting reprinted over and over again, affecting the power of their delivery.

The themes themselves create a weave that should be relevant to anyone interested in ecological movements, the law, genocide, or native issues. The design is clearly the telling of specific native tragedies as betrayals of exactly the type of jurisprudence that underpins American moral authority. The intention, in Churchill's own words: "This, then, is the context in which the native liberation struggle in North America should be viewed. The agendas... have nothing to do with attaining civil rights and other forms of "equality" for native people within the US and Canadian systems... Rather, the purpose is, quite specifically, to reassert the genuinely sovereign and self-determining status to which our nations are and have always been entitled."

To which there are two questions that merit asking. Is this the right fight? Is this a winnable fight? While the two are not necessarily separable, they will be approached one at a time. In our period of late colonization (when even most colonizers argue against it), most of the economic and moral arguments for colonization have been agreed on. Which is not to say that the conditions of colonization have changed particularly, but rather that the rhetoric has embraced the negation. Empire (if that's the most accurate term to describe this new world order) behaves more like a good chess player (with allusion, nuance, and threat) than like a linebacker. The vocal opposition to Empire appears to have agreed to most of the terms of engagement (boundaries, the rule of law, rights, terms of social behavior, and property). This frames the issue of native sovereignty as a fundamental challenge to the terms of Empire. It is a non-agreement to a foundational concept, of the right of Empire to control the land it occupies. Like most just conflicts, this one show little sign of victory on the horizon, but this is the least reason to abandon it.

All this makes Churchill's contributions that much more important. While there may not be any sign of eminent victory on the horizon, issues of native sovereignty are a direct challenge to the underpinnings of the society we live in. Churchill makes these challenges on legalistic, personal, and narrative lines.

—Aragorn!

The Clash: Return Of the Last Gang in Town
Marcus Gray
426 pages • $18.95
Hal Leonard • 151 W. 46th St. • New York, NY 10036

I've never quite understood what makes the Clash so legendary. While I admit their first LP is one of the best punk LPs ever, they looked punk as fuck, and their left wing politics were much more compelling than the Pistols' postured nihilism, its hard to forgive the later musical output which moved from patchy to downright unlistenable (*Sandinista*, anybody?) So I approached this book with a fair amount of curiosity and trepidation.

Gray's novel is no light read, weighing in 400-plus pages of small type. He appears to have left no stone unturned. The book covers everything from the early school days of the three main members (Joe Strummer, Mick Jones, and Paul Simonon) to the demise of the band in the mid 80s. What is evident from the get go is Gray's skill as an investigative journalist, the pages are littered with dates and facts gleaned from everything from school reports to interviews with soundmen and roadies. Gray's attention to detail is what makes this book interesting, as you are able to piece together the birth of punk (and consequently the Clash) in England through key events in the 70s.

What is immediately apparent though, is that this type of secondhand investigative journalism is all Gray has to build the book on. He has no actual interviews with any of the band members and relies solely on interviews in the rock magazines and fanzines of the time along with liner notes from the Clash's retrospective releases. The only interviews he does get are with bit part players in the Clash's history (ex members of bands Strummer and Jones were in, roadies, and "friends"). This fundamental lack of substance really lets the book down as one is constantly wondering if other than specifics, like dates, Gray has got his facts right or is just rehashing someone else's version of history.

Gray's style also seems in conflict—on the one hand, he comes off as relating the purely factual in keeping with the investigative journalist style, but then he puts forward his own opinions and theories. It seems as if Gray is desperate to have an "angle" for his book to give it some credibility, and it seems as if the angle is to unmask the band, who framed themselves as lefty revolutionary rockers, as frauds. I found myself irritated by Gray's snide attacks at the band (and this is from someone who prior to reading had no real opinion one way or the other). What I found most ridiculous was Gray's own interpretations of the band's lyrics as a backup for his assertion that the band members were phonies. For example, in "Career Opportunities," Strummer sings about life on the dole and Gray tries to discount the song by saying that although all the band members were unemployed, they had enough education to get jobs and so were somehow unfit to sing about being unemployed! This type of literal interpretation is scattered liberally throughout the book as Gray gives his own take on every one of the band's songs followed by how the lyrics do not match the band's actual experiences. He seems to allow no room for the fact that most rock 'n' rollers come from normal pedestrian lives and it is the persona the bands create which make them different and special. Although I agree that the Clash are guilty of revisionism and backtracking on statements they made early in their career, I believe that they (in particular Joe Strummer) were genuinely interested in left wing issues, however misdirected some of their causes seemed to be. Even with Gray's sniping, it is obvious that the band were ultimately concerned about their audience, with their insistence of low record prices and letting fans in for free at many of their shows (by the end of their career both of these points are arguable, however).

It is clear from Gray's handling of how the Clash fit into the birth of punk that he has little interest in the movement as a whole. Although he does cover (albeit fleetingly) most of the top bands of '76/77: the Jam, the Damned, the Buzzcocks, the Pistols, the Heartbreakers, etc., he dismisses any bands that came about after 1978 as bandwagon jumpers. He criticizes the Clash's first LP as being reactionary lyrically and simplistic musically (when any one with any interest in punk knows that this is one of the best LPs ever put to wax). Gray obviously comes from the camp that thinks the Clash's heyday was "London's Burning." In this section of the book Gray holds back his criticism of the band, lauding their new sound and direction. It is this literary manipulation which incenses me; Gray is clearly trying to steer the reader to his way of thinking, which makes this book worthless as an impartial historical tome.

It is, however, interesting to see the path taken by Strummer (or Woody Mellor as he was known then), from the squats of West London with the 101'ers to stadium rock of the 80s. Or Mick Jones'

failed attempts at Glam rock in the early 70s... it is these elements of the book where Gray has unearthed some interesting, unbiased material that makes for riveting reading. Once Gray stands up on his soapbox I lose interest.

The members of the Clash were young, idealistic and mismanaged by a strong dictatorial manager (Bernie Rhodes). I do not believe that they were as calculating as Gray tries to make out throughout his book. They were railroaded into a contract with CBS, which ultimately screwed them. Reading about the band's musical history prior to the Clash, you can see how their sound moved away from the urgent three-chord punk racket of their first LP. The 101'ers were essentially a rhythm and blues band, Mick Jones was obsessed with Mott the Hoople and the Glam scene, and Paul Simonon was a South London reggae skinhead. The punk scene of the late 70s was so mismanaged and chaotic that many of the early pioneers drifted away after the initial explosion (the Clash were essentially finished with punk as early as 1979), so people like the Clash reverted to what had influenced them prior to punk. Although much of the band's experimentation failed, their mix of punk and reggae was truly groundbreaking and came from influences long before the punk phenomenon ever reared its head. Now, I can't forgive the band's later audio transgressions, but Gray's book does go some way to giving a fair and plausible explanation of the band's drift away from the punk sound.

No matter what Gray does to discredit the band, they come off as genuine people with their hearts in the right place (even the egotistical Mick Jones) and I have a greater respect for the band after wading through this hefty book. It is hard to understand who this book is aimed at; any real fans of the Clash would have put the book down after a few pages, and would anyone who shared Gray's view of the Clash as revisionist phonies actually sit through all 400 pages? I doubt it. Criticisms aside, this book does have a lot of valuable information about the Clash and the music scene in the 70s and 80s. It's a shame that Gray has to ruin it by being so opinionated—this would have made a smashing read had it been half the size and if Gray's opinions had been left at the door.

—Tim Brooks

Politics on Trial: Five Famous Trials of the 20th Century
William Kunstler with Introduction by Karin Kunstler Goldman, Michael Ratner, and Michael Steven Smith
$9.95 • Ocean Books
www.oceanbooks.com.au

Trial lawyer William Kunstler originally wrote *Politics on Trial* in 1963. Each chapter represents a trial analysis of five significant trials, including Sacco and Vanzetti, the Scopes "Monkey" trial, the Scottsboro Nine, the Rosenburgs, and Engel, Education, and God. The chapters serve to describe not only the trials themselves in tremendous detail, but to highlight the inequities that existed (and still exist currently) in the US legal system.

Each chapter is a bit dry in its analysis, leaving out the social context of each time period as well as the personal histories of each of the defendants – for example, mentioning very little about the politics of Sacco and Vanzetti, or of the political and labor climate that engulfed Boston during the time of their trial. But what is so important about each chapter is that it explains each trial from beginning to end and depicts injustices that you almost can't believe, like the fact that not one person of color served on the initial Scottsboro Nine trial, even though there were hundreds of people who fit the criteria to be jurors. It was incredible to read about the written confession of one of the Scottsboro women who claimed to have been raped by nine boys—that confession ended with the conviction of one of the boys. Details like that abound in each chapter and give more depth to understanding these trials.

What is so crucial about this book is that it serves as a roadmap to understanding how the legal system worked and how it will continue to uphold the interests of the ruling party until it dies. Kunstler even made statements like these at lawyers' conventions throughout the country: "The law is nothing other than a method of control created by a socioeconomic system determined, at all costs, to perpetuate itself by all and any means necessary for as long as possible..." and "the Supreme Court is an enemy, a predominately white court representing the power structure" (1994).

Additionally, this book stands out for the introduction alone, which ties in the current politic climate and crisis of the "war on terrorism." The editors clarify how the Bush and Ashcroft regime has used the law to restrict our civil liberties and undermine the American Constitution. They explain the current military tribunal crisis, FBI arrests and detentions of non-US citizens/racial profiling, overriding the attorney/client privilege along with new anti-terrorism laws. Even with knowledge on these subjects, it is incredible and frightening to read page after page of legal analysis of specifics about what is going on in this country.

This book has a definite place in any radical or activist's bookshelf, because its juxtaposition of the current crisis with these five trials makes you realize that we have so much more work to do. The book ends with a list of resources for all the trials. What would have been helpful, though, is a list of resources for the current crisis as well, giving people a way to find out more about the prisoners held incommunicado at Quantanamo Bay or any of the atrocities that the US government is currently committing.

—Kim Fern

Punk Als Verzetje
History of Dutch Punk Rock
Johan Van Leeuwen
108 pages • $15.00
Laan van Berlioz 6
2151 GR Nieuw Vennep • Netherlands

This booklet basically covers most of the punk and hardcore scenes in Holland from the late 70s to the late 80s and early 90s. The first chapter gives a brief overview of Dutch punk and how it was influenced by both the international scenes, including MRR, and the anarchist movement.

The booklet then covers each of the major geographical centers of Holland, leading off with Amsterdam. It explains how the Amsterdam scene evolved from some of the earliest bands, such as BGK and the EX, playing in some of the first clubs, including Autonomenkerk, Emma (made famous by a great double LP entitled Emma), and Van Hall. Through the rest of the chapters we learn about the other scenes, in such places as Groningen, Zeeland, Brabant, Gelderland, Limburg, and other regions of the country. Almost every band that had any influence on the punk scene receives some mention, including one of the greatest of all Dutch bands, Ivy Green. Other bands discussed include Anarcrust, Bambix, Bobwire, Deadlock, Frites Modern, Lärm, Jetset, L'Attentat, Oh Dev, Pandemonium, Morzelpronk, and hundreds of other great bands that made up one of the most influential scenes in the world.

The booklet also comes with a complete discography of all the bands and the records they each put out, including the date and the label. Finally, throughout these 108 pages are reproductions of zine covers, gig flyers, and some album covers. This booklet is an invaluable source of information even for those who cannot read Dutch. The discography could stand by itself—its only drawback is that there are not reproductions of all the record covers.

—Harald

MOVIES

FINAL CUT

BY STEVEN SPINALI

TRAUDL JUNGE UBER ALLES

At her job interview, 22-year-old Traudl Junge thought him "a kindly old man." That was in 1942, and the man was Adolph Hitler. **Blind Spot** doesn't rely on reenactments or narrative intrusions to break up the story. In this quite remarkable 90-minute film, Junge is only the one in front of the camera, an 81-year-old woman burdened with a story she's kept secret for fifty years.

The mature Traudl Junge seems relatively self-possessed, but that was hardly the case when the virginal secretary applied for a job with Hitler "because it looked interesting." Personnel loss waa continual problem (on several levels) for Hitler, so he asked whether she planned to leave her job to get married.

"I've lived 22 years without a man," she replied, "so that's no problem for me."

In those early days, the handpicked group of five secretaries would enjoy daily meals and tea with the Fuhrer, whose personal quirks left Junge perplexed. She would have to bundle up whenever Hitler took dictation, because he liked to have his spartan east Prussian headquarters icy cold. He suffered from chronic health problems due to his sedentary lifestyle. While Hitler wore his military uniform continuously, for some reason he seldom touched on the subject of war in the presence of his secretaries.

In a departure from the usual behavior of tyrants, Hitler never made sexual overtures to his young female staff. He also didn't like to be touched, and rarely showed anything akin to affection. The exception was his dog Blondie, whom he was convinced was remarkably smart. (The dog could, among other things, ape the styles of certain popular singers, to the delight of everyone.)

Traudl Junge was not privy to Hitler's wartime atrocities until much later. According to Junge, Hitler claimed that individual happiness didn't matter, with precedence always reserved for the state. And this coldness came at a price; Traudl can't remember Hitler using the word "love"; even his famous relationship with Eva Braun was strangely unerotic.

Traudl's isolated life became more precarious in late April 1944, when Allied incendiaries rained on Germany. Hitler distributed cyanide pills to everyone. (He tested them on Blondie first.) With fears of Allied attacks, "international Bolshevism", and even betrayal from his own staff, everyone—even Traudl Junge—shared in his fatalism and despair. The only affection she remembers Hitler ever having shown was a marriage kiss for Eva, which shortly preceded their death. Even Fraulein Goebbels carefully rationed her supply of cyanide pills, saving them for her six young children.

Traudl Junge was so close to the events that she actually heard the gunshot that killed Hitler.

What puts **Blind Spot** in a special class is Junge's unusually detailed recounting of the events, told with such a typically German attention to detail that they seem as though they'd just happened. This is a coming-of-age story for a girl who began her tenure with the dictator as a naive girl, and later built up architecture of conscience that would reflect that of a new German people.

Despite the nation's battle scars, it would take twenty years until Germany published books on the terrifying history of Germany's National Socialism, and another four decades would pass before Fraulein Junge told her version of the events.

Adolph Hitler's legacy has made him almost an icon of evil. Through Traudl Junge, we discover that the man under the iconic mask was both more human and more terrifying than we had imagined. Directors Andre Heller and Othmar Schinderer are equally adept at charting the personal journey of Traudl Junge, whose face is a canvas of restrained emotion as she tells her story. She passed away shortly after filming.

Costa-Gavras' **Amen** approaches the Third Reich from a fictional standpoint, but it's as historically rigorous as many documentaries. The story is told through the wartime travails of SS Captain Kurt Gurstein (Ulrich Takur), a well-liked doctor and chemical engineer whose application of Zyklom-B allowed field soldiers to turn roadside sludge into potable water. On a trip through Poland, his good friend and superior (Ulrich Muhe) allows him to witness another application of the chemical. When he's shown to a gas chamber, Gerstein squints through an eyehole and his face turns slack. As he later discovers, the trains arrive full, but return empty—at the rate of about 10,000 "units" a day. This becomes the film's *leit motiv*; trains steaming back and forth, as the world turns a blind eye.

Gerstein, a faithful Protestant, is stricken with mounting despair. Those he entrusts with the secret won't believe him. Those who do believe are afraid to do anything. Even a local Catholic bishop shoos him away. On the other hand, his friend from the SS is almost nostalgic about the deaths, commenting that Prague was getting to be such "a pretty Jewish cemetery."

Gerstein's fate changes when he meets Fr. Riccardo Fontana (Mathieu Kassovitz), an idealistic young Jesuit whose father works at the Vatican. Fr. Fontana's only hope is to find a way to get the information to the ears of the insulated Pope Pius XXII. Fr. Fontana assumes that the prelate would immediately renounce the Nazis and call the substantial Catholic population in Europe to protest. Of course, history would follow a different course; Pius would later be dubbed "Hitler's Pope."

Amen got released with little publicity, largely ignored by local media—almost a conspiracy of silence of its own. (There were two people in my theater, including me.) This is disheartening, because no drama has revealed the complicity between organized religion and the Third Reich more lucidly. It's especially chilling how it counterpoints the speed of the Nazi war machine to the measured pace of an ineffectual Vatican diplomacy. Compared to a film like **The Pianist**, **Amen** probably has a better balance of brains and soul. Even now, the modern-day church is moving to smooth over the past and make Pope Pius XXII a saint. **Amen** sets the record straight.

Well-known British artist David Hockney has been in pursuit of a different sort of lost history, and it's been landing him into hot water. His new documentary **Secret Knowledge** will only rankle his critics.

It's no secret to art historians that at around 1420, paintings suddenly "got better." Instead of the two-dimensional images of the early Renaissance, art started to show up in hyper-realistic three-dimensions. Metal, which had previously been rendered in dull gray, now had glinting, steely highlights. Lace and fiber, which before had been glossed over, was now articulated in brilliant detail to the tini-

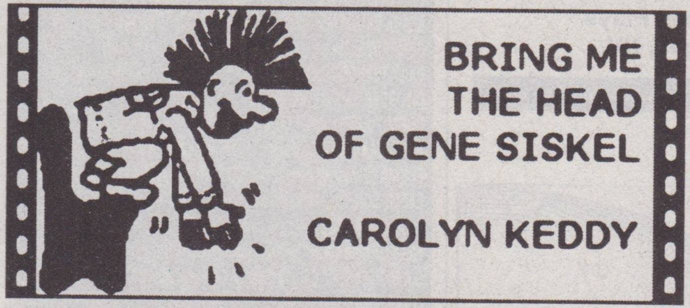
est thread. Lighting, which had been fairly monochromatic, now showed glorious contrast, the light virtually bringing their subjects to life.

Experts took all this for granted. For research, Hockney acquired photocopies of hundreds of the continent's greatest oil paintings, and pinned them up chronologically and geographically across his walls. Sure enough, a little before 1420, art made a quantum jump.

At first, Hockney was at a loss to explain what had happened. Some portraits were strangely distorted, with torsos much longer than that of normal people. In one case, the painting was partly *blurred*, like an imperfectly focused photograph. In yet another, by Giotto, all the subjects are left handed: the man, the woman—*and* the monkey. Aberrations like these suggested something that's troubling to art historians—that many Renaissance artists may have used a mirror (or camera obscura) to reflect images of their subjects onto the canvas. Later, the concave mirror and lens (as used by Leonardo da Vinci in his telescopes) were appropriated for the artist's studio.

In one of the most convincing demonstrations, Hockney sets out to Florence to view Brunelleschi's baptistry. Setting up the camera obscura exactly where the painter had sat, Hockney manages to bring up a perfect duplicate of the painting on his reflecting screen—including the optical errors.

David Hockney employs non-technical language to describe complicated optical principles, recreating in his own studio some of the feats of Vermeer, Caravaggio, and Van Eyck. Calling back ideas that had been in use from the time of Archimedes, **Secret Knowledge** is certain to fascinate anyone interested in a good mystery—and send a new generation of art historians fuming.



YOU CAN'T BE IN THE BOUNCING SOULS IF YOU TALK TO YOURSELF

It's not easy to make a band documentary. There has to be some really great story you want to let the world know about or else you have to hope the band has millions of diehard fans who need to know every boring detail of the members' lives. **Do You Remember? – 15 Years of The Bouncing Souls** (www.chunksaah.com) goes for the latter. Since I am not a fan, I am at least looking to be entertained by an amazing story of the struggles of the band. The Bouncing Souls haven't had many obstacles in their existence. That doesn't mean they did work hard to get were they are today. They did the touring, recording, mailing, and partying. It's just that no one got into drugs, no one got arrested, and no one died.

The biggest thing that happened to Bouncing Souls is that they had to kick out their drummer of 13 years. This whole scene makes them look like idiots. In the beginning, bass player Bryan says that he is not going to go into the details because they do not think it is fair to original drummer Shal. Yet that doesn't stop them from talking about it for at least ten minutes. What I could get out of all their backpedaling and pussyfooting around the subject is that Shal started to get detached from the rest of the band, his drumming was not as good as it usually is, and he started to talk to himself. That started a wave of joking at my house; when someone was talking to him/ herself or mumbling, we would say, "You can't be in the Bouncing Souls if you talk to yourself." It cracked us up for a day or so.

That leads to a record number of times a band has ever kissed the ass of someone they kicked out. The remaining members talk about how great he *was*, making me think that perhaps he is dead. He isn't. He just doesn't talk to any of them anymore. They don't even have the guts to interview him for the documentary. It would be nice to know what he thinks of all this. Let him tell his side. Why was he talking to himself? It would at least make this a little more climactic.

The rest of it is your usual band stuff. The Bouncing Souls met each other while in high school. Then they moved into a house together. They started throwing parties so their band could play somewhere. They developed a following. They released records. They started to question themselves. The bass player started drinking heavily. The singer and drummer went to India to work on their spiritual side. They are still a band after fifteen years.

Do You Remember? – 15 Years of The Bouncing Souls is a double DVD collection, but I only received one of the DVDs to review. That one has the documentary and some deleted scenes. The other one apparently has some live footage and a couple of music videos. If you are a Bouncing Souls fan you should be more than happy. The rest of us will have to wait for Shal to come out of hiding.

I know so many people hated **Amelie** because of its cutesy, everything is wonderful and possible attitude. I loved it in spite of that, but that is beside the point. **He Loves Me...He Loves Me Not** is being passed off as the anti-**Amelie** and rightly so, since it relies heavily on people acknowledging actress Audrey Tatou's role as Amelie. In this first half of this film, Tatou plays up her innocent, in-love-with-love ways.

An art student, Angelique has just won a scholarship to go study in Paris. She seems smart, talented, and happy. Her boyfriend Loic is a married doctor, but she still keeps her positive attitude that love will triumph over marriage. She sends him a single rose as a present for their anniversary. She paints him a portrait for his birthday. She brushes off her friend's warnings that she should not get involved with a married man. Then when the couple has planned a trip to Italy, Loic does not show up at the airport. Angelique becomes completely depressed. Loic is then accused of assaulting one of his patients.

Then **He Loves Me... He Loves Me Not** rewinds and we get to see another perspective of what is transpiring. This time around it is reality. Angelique barely knows Loic. She is housesitting at the house next to his. He gives her a ride home from a party. She becomes obsessed with him. The anonymous gifts he continually receives from her begin to drive him crazy. He has no idea who is sending them. His wife thinks he is having an affair. Then it goes from bad to worse.

I bet I would have enjoyed **He Loves Me... He Loves Me Not** if I did not know anything about what was going to happen. The surprise aspect in combination with the reversed perspective would have made the film a lot better.

I heard about Shaye St. John (www.shayesaintjohn.com) through an internet film discussion list. I usually don't really care what anyone on the list says about films, but every once in a while something interesting comes up. That's why I still subscribe. Someone brought up how they just discovered this woman in Los Angeles named Shaye St. John. Shaye was injured in a car accident and lost both her arms and legs and her face was badly burnt. She wears a mask and messed up prosthetics and stars with some dolls in the short films on her website.

The films are funny little glimpses into the twisted world of Hollywood from an insider's outsider perspective. **Bottom's Off** is the story of Kiki's attempt to become Shirley Temple 2000. Of course, the demanding role requires nudity so Kiki goes for it. Shaye is outraged. **Happy Turkey Day** follows Shaye as she attends a Thanksgiving Day party. She is having a great time and then she freaks out on the other guests. In **Modeling Session,** Shaye's big day has come she gets a call to be a model. She is so nervous she can't sleep and Kiki's beeper keeps going off. She is late for her session. My personal favorite is **Pop Shaye,** a great send up of Andy Warhol and the Factory.

There is a documentary about The Gits in the works. For more information and to see a trailer, you to www.thegitsmovie.com. I am looking forward to seeing it.

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to me c/o MRR, PO Box 406760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. You can also reach me by e-mail at carolynmrr@juno.com

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- INFAUST "Muster" CD $10 (Industrial nightmare a la Godflesh)
- LARSEN "No" CD $9 or LP $11 (80's Spanish Punk repressed)
- MERDA "Curtiçao dos jovens" CD $10 (Brazilian punx going nuts!)
- NAPALMED / MERZBOW "Crash of the titans" CD $10 (Insane Electro-Noise)
- OI POLLOI "Fight back" CD $10
- PEGGIO PUNX "Discography" 2xCD $11 (80's Punk from Italy)
- PHILLIPPÉ "The essence continues" CD $10 (Post-HC delicatessen)
- PRESTO? "Odio puro concentrado" CD $10 (GrindCore masters from Brazil)
- QLOAQA LETAL "... Nunca siempre" CD $6 (Spanish Punk/After-Punk legend)
- RATOS DE PORAO "Descanse em paz" CD $9 (2nd album)
- RAW POWER "You are the victim" CD $9 (Their 1983 album remastered!)
- RIPCORD "Hardcore" CD $11 (Discography part 1)
- RIPCORD "More songs about..." CD $11 (Discography part 2)
- SIN DIOS "Odio al imperio" CD $7 (The Anarchopunx latest release!)
- SUBTERRANEAN KIDS "85-88 The hardcore years" CD $6 (Spanish legend)
- THE VARUKERS "How do you sleep????" CD $11
- VUUR / SEEIN' RED 7" $4
- WARCOLLAPSE "Divine intoxication" CD $10 (Crust as fuck baby!)
- WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? / OVERTHHHROW "Livin' la vida loca!" CD $7
- ZINC "Old mundo punk!" CD $9 (awesome fast HC/Punk a la 80's)

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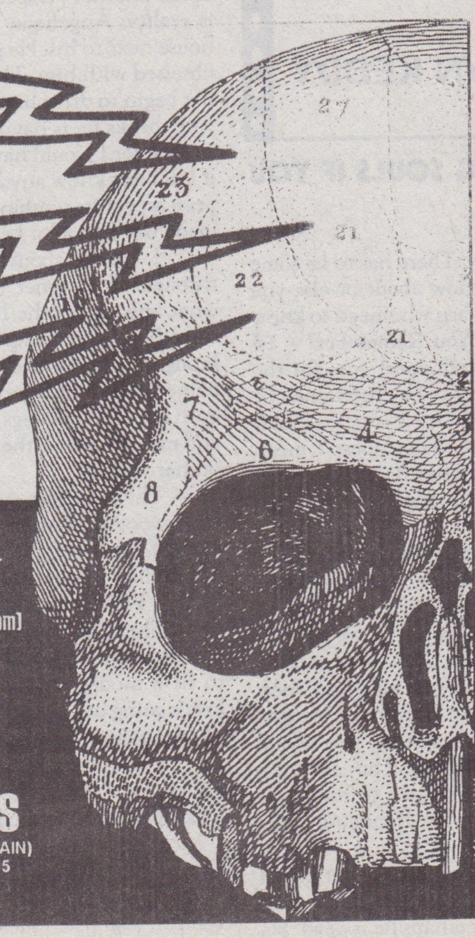

FORCE11 **ziNC**

Fast HC/Punk a la early R.K.L. or Black Flag. 16 songs + cd-rom track (live video-clip, screensavers...). Some copies including a safety pin inside the jewel case are still available

FORCE10 **Raw pOwer**

Their first album from 1983 remastered. 14 songs + cd-rom track (live footage from the 80's...). Some copies with a silk-screened jewel case are still available

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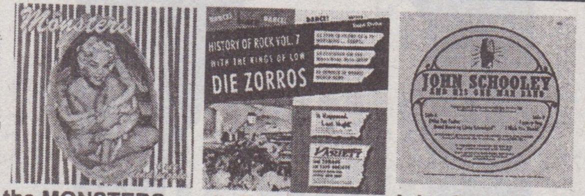

the MONSTERS
'i see dead people'
LP:VR1214 /CD: VRCD14

theyr 6th album and this one is as Fuzz Punk as it gets... pure primitive rock'n'roll far out feedback overdose Garage Punk.. and for the first time with the amazing CLONE Drum set... you have songs such as i see dead people, kiss you dead burn in flames, acid dreams... nothing exept the sleeve has a nice and positive touch... this is all negative to the edge... if you go for garage punk with power of todays Youth against nature generation then this Wax and platic's for you
BE TRASH AND
HATE THE WORLD

die ZORROS
'history of rock vol.7'
LP: VR1215 CD: VRCD15

imagin Mrs.Miller and king Uszniewizc having a band together doing Striptease and sleazy cheasy Nightclub music from the 60's and 70's... that's exactly how dieZORROS auta switzerland are sleazy elevator music playd in a incredable lo budges porn movie Beat-Man (drums) Patrick Abt (guitars) and Olifr.M.Guz (farfisa organ) take hits like: brazil, Stairway to heaven, Black is black and shrink'm to a minimum... you even here a spagetti version of europ's classic: FINAL COUNTDOWN !!!

John Schooley & his one man band
'drive you faster'
7" single: VR709

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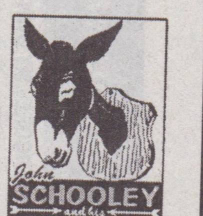

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HIPBONE SLIM AND THE KNEE TREMBLERS
'snake pit' LP: VR1217 CD: VRCD17

What can we say about this band? Other than it features three of Britain's most prominent and talented rock 'n' roll musicians, whose individual musical histories take in the best British garage, surf, trash, punk and beat bands of the last 20 years.
The band is led by Sir Bald Diddley, who has been a leading world force in the field of surf and rock 'n' roll instrumentals for a decade or more. Currently, he also fronts his own garage-freak-beat combo 'The Snags' and runs the fantastic Alopecia Records.

On bull fiddle is John 'Lard' Gibbs, who was the original bass player in the Kaisers and now plays 4 strings for those magnificent Scottish din-makers 'The Wildebeests'.
The near legendary Bruce 'Bash' Brand has been around for more years and graced more beat combos than he probably cares to remember. He has walloped skins for thee Milkshakes, Headcoats, Mighty Caesars amongst many others, including the Link Wray no less. Needless to say their own brand of rockabilly, rock 'n' roll and blues is pretty darned hot!
This album features twelve top notch original compositions. It was recorded at the amazing Toe Rag Studios of London, using 100% original equipment. We are sure that you will agree that the results of the boys efforts in the studio are a quite superb vintage rock 'n' roll offering. full of fire, verve, energy, atmosphere and fun. This is Hipbone Slim and the Knee Tremblers' debut album. Doubtless, it won't be their last.

coming soon:
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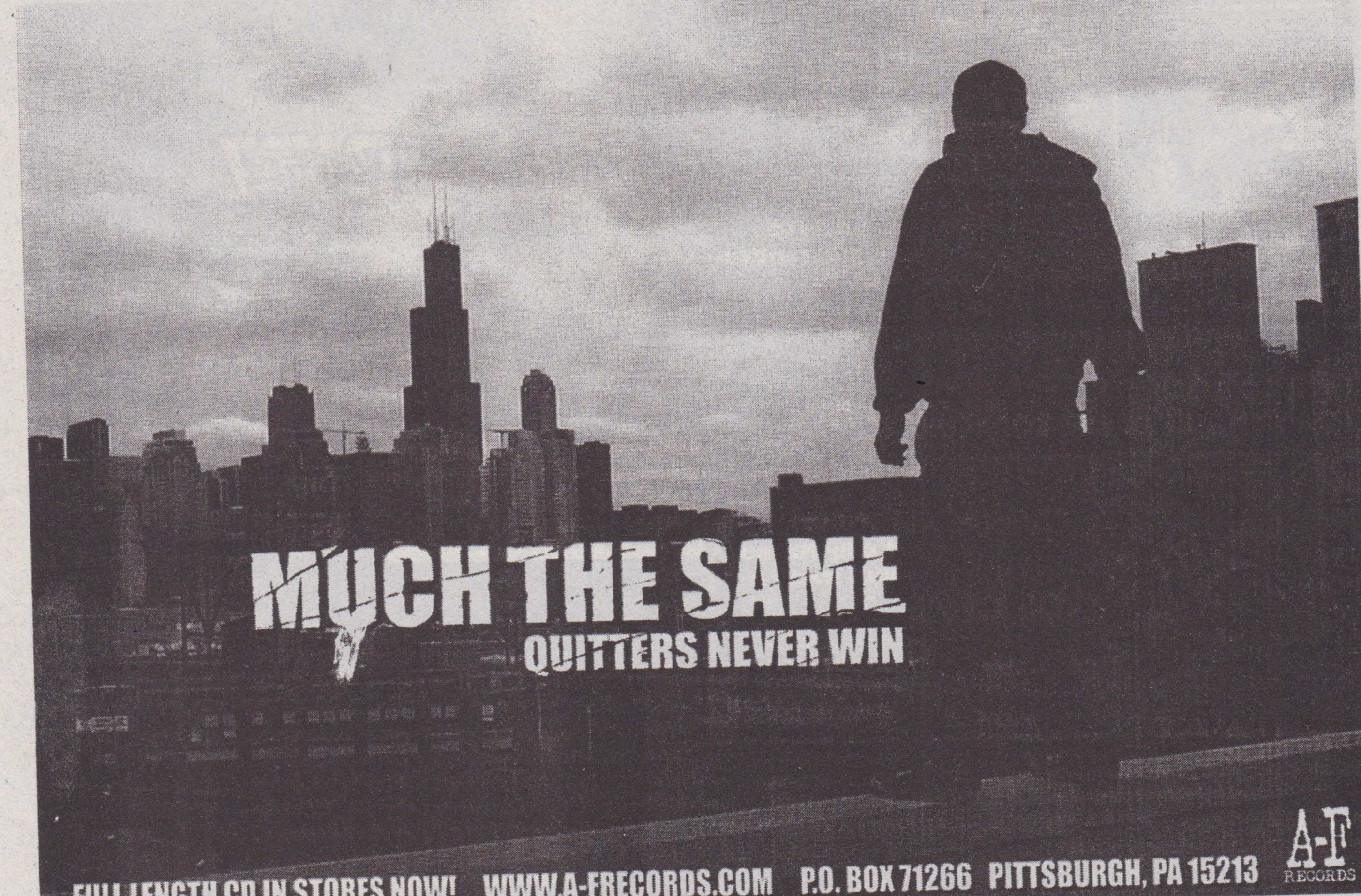
Jerry J Nixon (50's raw rockabilly legend)
the Monsters
(youth against nature)

the Del Gators
'pound down' LP (only)

13 heart thumpin', hip grinding, head boppin' R'N'B numbers that are sure to catch even the most discriminate rock'n'roll aficionados off guard.... led by CocoButter Khan and guitarist Oily Chi (Spaceshits). Dorrito Dan (Sexareenos, Spaceshits) on drums, Choyce (Daylight Lovers)



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ARTIMUS PYLE - inheritance 7" "new recordings of this amazing HC like HIS HERO IS GONE or bands like that"
WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? - Euro thrash 7" "new recordings of that thrashtitans. Released for the european tour"
ASSCHAPEL - fire and destruction LP "Fast HC from USA, a mix between FROM ASHES RISE and LOCUST"
HOLIER THAN THOU? - s/t 7" "Old school thrash between ACCÜSED and HERESY"
DROP DEAD / STACK - s/t 7" "I think this release don´t need any description"
DESTROYER - s/t 7" "HC thrash like VOID / FU´s / FREEZE or whatever"

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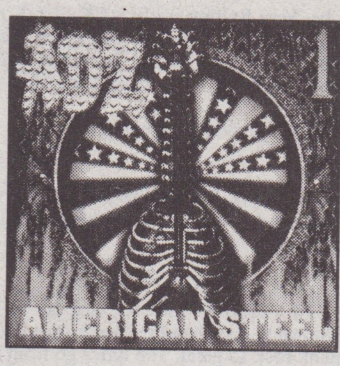


ADZ - "American Steel" CD
Oh my God, it's so weird hearing the same voice that sang "Amoeba" singing bad TURBONEGRO-inspired rawk. And sad. (DP)
(Steel Cage, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125)

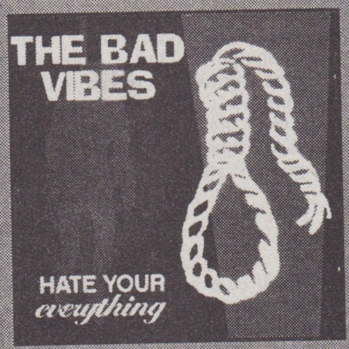
AGHAST - "Polaroid" CD
From the land of French fries, French kissing, French Poodles, and French bread...that's right—France, come AGHAST, blasting all before them with their big emo shotguns. This is emo of the screamo variety, it has melodic moments that lull you into a false sense of security where you're thinking everything's okay, it's a nice day, this is nice music, and then oh no! What's this? It gets all loud and crashing and some guy's screaming at you and everything's not okay, no it's not okay at all... Actually, for such a foul genre (that's not a bad name for a band, let's see what it looks like in *MRR* uppercase FOUL GENRE, pretty cool) this isn't too bad, the music's good, it's just that the screaming gets on your wick after a while. (AD)
(Weewee, 25 Rue Goudouli, 31240 Saint Jean, FRANCE)

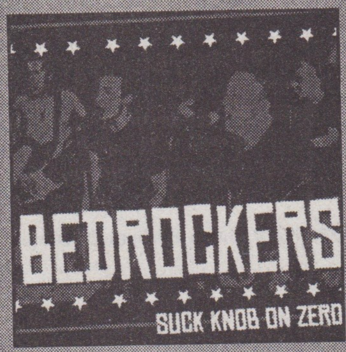
AFTERLIFE - "Enter the Dragon" EP
Bad title, good record. Each song has lots of parts, and lots of guitar octaves. AFTERLIFE do a great job at blending intense hardcore with lots of melody. If I had to compare this to a band from the States, I would probably say CHAMPION. Aside from some of the lyrics getting lost in the translation, and the occasional English grammatical mistake, this record is fucking right on. My drummer would probably shit himself over this band. The CD version of this release has a sick INSTED cover. (CC)
(Crucial Response, Kaisersfield 98, 46047 Oberhausen, GERMANY)

AGATHOCLES - "To Serve...to Protect/Leads to..." CD
This is a kick-ass re-release of the *To Serve...to Protect* CD - originally released in 1999 on Vacation House Records out of Italy—which was a gathering of AG's split 12" with UNHOLY GRAVE and their split 12" with DISCULPA—both LPs were released in 1999. The difference between this CD and the original is the new addition of the split 7" with KONTATTO—released in 2000. 19 songs in 37minutes and 21 seconds of pure unadulterated Belgian Mince-core. After 58 EPs (splits and otherwise), 16 LPs, and 31 CD releases, most people should know which side of the AGATHOCLES fence they're on. I for one am a mince-happy punk. (WM)
(No Fashion HC, c/o Sergio Giacomassi, Caixa Postal 03, CEP: 13450-970, Santa Bárbara D' Oeste – SP BRASIL, massiser@hotmail.com)

ANADOREI - "We'll Break Male's Fantasy" EP
"Shrieking tribal mess:" didn't work that into many conversations at the library today. This is out on a label that usually busies itself with MICK FARREN reissues and MARBLE SHEEP records, so hippy psych with attitude. This however, is a total "shrieking tribal mess." My second BOREDOMS bow of the issue. A shrill frog bleats over a band playing frozen rubber bands with rattail combs stuck up their asses. Wow, how's that for an 80s 'zine-type review! Cover shows cute Japanese girls (yeah, the band's all female) acting nutsy and distorted. Who cares, like, five copies will make it out of Japan... (RW)
(Captain Trip, 3-17-14 Minimi-Koiwa, Edogawaku, Tokyo, JAPAN)

ANTI-ANTI - "Slumber Party Massacre" CD
Yep, some more adolescent, male-perspective, fast, crunchy, pop punk. Not original, but pretty solid musically and lyrically insightful on tunes like: "It's Gotta Suck to Be a Girl," "My Girlfriend's a Nympho," "More Than Just a Fuck." Wow. (HM)
(www.geocities.com/weareantianti)





ANTI OTPAD - "Radnicki San" CD

Quick-paced slightly melodic hardcore from Croatia. Anthemic vocal delivery and crunchy guitars with a slight Dis-flavor to them. Great. (MT)
(Humanitanova, Verdan Miniga, V. Ruzdjaka 8, 1000 Zagreb, CROATIA, marko.vukovi@zamir-zg.ztn.apc.org)

ANTiSEEN - "Here to Ruin Your Groove" LP

Reissue of a Confederacy of Scum classic with bonus 45 ("Fuck All Y'all/Fornication"). I've never been able to get much past the halfway to Death-Metal-Cookie-Monster growl of Mr. Clayton, but more power to ANTiSEEN for sticking to their guns and developing their own Dixie Fried punk/metal/freak vision. (DD)
(TKO, 3126 W. Cary St. #303, Richmond, VA 23221, www.tkorecords.com)

APES - "Street Warz" 10"

The facts: a 10" picture disc. Also: the seeds sown by the PHANTOM LIMBS begin to grow fruit, however devolved they may be. Here are the APES, who take the LIMBS paranoia-fest and drudge it the fuck up. Plod it the hell down. Make it less interesting. The songs are just not put together with same the attention to, well, er, "hooks," which doesn't mean catchy in this context so much as "head-turning." My inner Linda Blair ain't lookin' over her shoulder yet. (RW)
(Planaria, PO Box 21340, Washington, DC, 20009, www.planaria.com)

ARAB ON RADAR - "The Stolen Singles" CD

The day...the disco...died. I've heard the 'DAR on several of their long-players and was none too terribly impressed. Turns out they're a singles band. Many more worthy moments here for other prog-punks who were similarly nonplused by their extended workouts. Since their 45s now go for inexplicably silly dough, this CD is art-punk for the masses courtesy those oh-so-populist hand wringers at 31G. Redeem their shattered faith in humanity with some cash. (RW)
(31G, PO Box 178262, San Diego, CA 92177)

ASBEST - "NYT Blod" EP

So simple, but so effective, just like a punk record ought to be. Very Rollins-era BLACK FLAG, all blunt outbursts and driving (around blind corners) guitar—it's missing the Ginn element, but you can't have everything. Five songs, all in Danish with no translations, but knowing you, you're not buying this for the lyrics. This record wants to wake you up in the middle of the night to do drugs, and even though you're basically a good kid, you just can't say no, it's got that kind of magnetism. (AC)
(Hjernespind, Svanevej 20 B, 1. TH, 2400 KØbenhavn NV, DENMARK, njernespind@hotmail.com)

THE BAD VIBES - "Hate Your Everything" CD

I don't hate everything, I just dislike your by-the-numbers tuff guy punk. It should be pointed out by someone that I am really not "qualified" to review this. I gave up lousy bar band "angry" punk a long time ago. (RW)
(Steel Cage, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125, www.steelcagerecords.com)

BAGGAGE/THE TIM VERSION - split EP

This is decidedly the best thing I've heard this month. The TIM VERSION rock the fuck out TRIAL BY FIRE-style with gruff vocals, unashamed melody, and a slight slowdown to less-than-breakneck speed, all with a healthy dose of that certain special something that makes Florida punk rock so great. The lyrics go from personal to political on these two songs, and remain pissed throughout. With lines like "kill the kings, we'll be their heirs," how can you go wrong? No Idea should snap these guys up. BAGGAGE from Japan are less thrilling, but do a good job at pulling off the whole R.E.M.-through-a-punk-lens thing. For the love of Pete, give the TIM VERSION their own full length. (MX)
(Snuffy Smile, 4-1-16-201 Daita, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo 155-0033, JAPAN)

BARBARA ANN - "Ode to My Freaks" LP

This must be an LA thing. A model-esqe woman backed by Greg Hetson on guitar and others. Going for that HOLLY & THE ITALIANS sound or maybe the newer Sympathy crowd of girl groups. The vocals could be better, but this isn't bad for gal singer power pop punk although there is some slower rock mixed in. (RL)
(Pretty Face, www.BarbaraAnn.tv)

THE BEAUTYS - "The First Seven Inches Are Always the Hardest" CD

For the same reasons I relish early TILT songs, I like this band. Even though I could imagine them playing in lots of bars, I gotta hand it to them for pulling off the country punk thing without any embarrassing casualties. (MM)
(Diaphragm, PO Box 10388 Columbus, OH 43201)

BEDROCKERS - "Suck Knob On Zero" CD

Odd sounding disc this, kinda sounds like a street punk BAD RELIGION. Very melodic and catchy but with that whole "nautical stars tattooed on the neck" roughness. The four studio tracks are damn good but the live one stinks....not bad odds. (TB)
(924 S. 11th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19147)

BENNY – "Finnish Road Junction" CD

Wow, this is not what I expected from the cover. The first song is total balls out solid HÜSKER DÜ-style punk, from there it speeds up and before you know it you're listening to a great cover of MEN AT WORK's "Down Under" (I overheard a conversation on the bus recently wherein this guy was admitting to being naïve as he always thought that the aforementioned song was actually about Australia, when it's obviously about oral sex. I had difficulty thinking about anything else the rest of the evening.) and the Aussie theme continues with their version of ROLF HARRIS's "Two Little Boys" and then from there it all gets kind of all over the place (much like this review) but the bottom line is that it kicks ass (or "arse") whether it's fast and silly, or solid and rocking. (AD)
(Boss Tuneage, PO BOX74, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG17 2WB, UK)

BENNY/BABY LITTLE TABLETS - split EP

I always pay attention to the Boss Tuneage label, the person who runs it seems to have taste similar to mine, so I was excited to see something from them in my reviewer bin. This release is a mix bag though, BENNY have

that modern English melodic sound, but didn't really capture my attention until the last song which reminded me of a cross between RANDY and HATE FUCK TRIO. Japan's BABY LITTLE TABLETS fair a little better playing a sloppy yet infectious brand of melodic punk, not unlike WATER CLOSET. Oh, the vinyl on this 7" is pressed on a heavy weight blue and white swirl. (JF)
(Boss Tuneage, PO Box 74, Sandy, Beds, SG19 2WB, UK)

THE BETA RAYS - "Can't Sleep" EP
They didn't write "Shockwave Detroit" on this record for nothing. Straight out of the MC5 book of tricks come these fuzzed out guitars and super distorted vocals. Luckily, they have good songs that sound like leftovers from the 60s. The guitar solos are kept to a minimum too. (CK)
(Pure Vinyl, Sandgasse 8b, A-4020 Linz, Austria, fluchg.purev@aon.at)

BIG MIDNIGHT - "Doin' All Right/Love for Sin" 45
.....ouch!!...formally known as the RICHMOND SLUTS...they've dropped the keyboards and changed their name and also added MR. IGGY POP himself as their lead singer....!!!! All in all it reminds me of 70s STONES fused perfectly with the two fabulous STEVE JONES solo records, held right in place with IGGY's stiff cock for support......overall, I think I'd find more satisfaction in eating out my own father's plump, wet....and hairy.......ass-hole....!!!! (SW)
(Alive, PO Box 7112, Burbank, Ca 91510)

THE BLACKS - "Take This Town/ Mutate Radiate"
Wow. I know I've been down on this band in the past since I prefer the BLACKS from Sweden, but this is the best stuff I've heard from them. Two short, screeching hardcore blasts. The vocals on this are great. I am sorry to hear that this was recorded just prior to the death of their singer Chad. (CK)
($3 ppd., Chemical Valley, 205 E Alturas, Tucson, AZ 85705)

BLOWCHUNKS - "Little Suzie/Baby's Got a Dick" 45
Jesus Christ, I never thought I'd say it but this is almost too lo-fi. Feedback galore and fuzz out the wa-zooo! Almost sounds like it was recorded live with a handheld tape recorder. Nonetheless, what I can hear through it all sounds pretty good. High speed, high energy garage rock ala TEENGENERATE, or the DON'T CARES. Goddamn fellas, clean it up a little, cuz it sounds good. (AS).
(High School Refuse, Berlagaweg 12, 973 LN Groningen, NETHERLANDS)

BONES - "Six Feet Down and Two Fingers Up" 10"
Ten inch vinyl, on pretty burgundy swirl vinyl, a bunch of Scandinavian pretty boys with tattoos, greasy hair and wife beaters, posing on a hot rod.... I'm not sure if the good outweighs the bad here. What the fuck is it with Scandinavian bands? Are they required to wank this much? Is there a law? "Every band in Scandinavia must have indulgent guitar solos and sound like real badasses"? This isn't a bad record—it's pretty decent, but totally fits into the Euro Big Rawk stereotype. From here on in, this form of music is now know as "Scandinavian Choad Rock." I hath spoken. Dammit. (BM)
(I Used To Fuck People Like You In Prison, Bruskstr, 42-44, 44135, Dortmund, GERMANY)

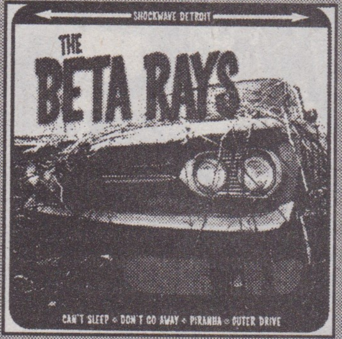
BONESCRATCH - "Last Words Gone" LP
BONESCRATCH hail from Sapporo, Japan, and have a sound that reminds me a bunch of UNIVERSAL ORDER OF ARMAGEDDON or the GREAT UNRAVELING. The vocals are sort of a cross between HR of BAD BRAINS and UOA. The production is excellent. And now that I think about it, this reminds me a bunch of another Japanese band I reviewed a few months ago, CARNIVAL OF DARK SPLIT, definitely a similar style. Hard-hitting, technical hardcore with a lot going on musically, but still completely driving. Well worth checking out. (SP)
(Blood Sucker, #203 1-16-18 Kusunoki-cho Nishi-ku, Hiroshima, JAPAN)

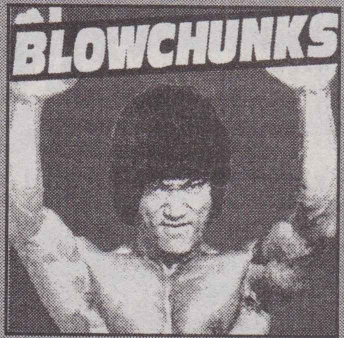
BREAKFAST - "Vertigo" LP
Like many a 625 release, this starts out at an insane blitzkrieg pace of thrashing guitars and a whirlwind drums—out of control, almost tuneless thrash. While that certainly isn't a bad thing, where this record really starts to get interesting is about halfway through, when gears are switched and they veer into some amazing MINUTE-MEN meets BIG BOYS-style jams. I could do without the SLEEP-esque space rock workout which takes up the majority of side two, but since all the good stuff is on the flip I just won't play it ever again. Top notch release. (MT)
(625, PO Box 423413, San Francisco, CA 94142-3413, www.625thrash.com)

BULEMICS - "Soundtrack to the Apocalypse" CD
It's too bad that such otherwise decent punk should have such misogynist lyrics. Does the world really need more songs about raping and killing girls? Offended? Nah, just bored. (MT)
(Steel Cage)

BUTTOCKS - "1978-'83—Mehr Pogo Leute!" LP
Maybe the BUTTOCKS weren't the most consistent of the early German punk outfits, but this compilation shows them to good advantage, with a collection of 29 early live and a few studio recordings that capture their loose, wild, slash-and-burn approach to punk rock. Their stand-out version of SHAM 69's "I Don't Wanna" is uniquely their own. Sound quality varies somewhat—but I'm sure that suits the BUTTOCKS just fine. (SS)
(Weird System, Alsterweite 32, 2000 Hamburg 1, GERMANY)

CARBONA/BREAKAWAYS - split EP
Outstanding. I've been meaning to sit down and give CARBONA a listen for a while. The pop punk kids say they are quite the cat's meow. Three songs from these Brazilian pop punkers in the vein of the APERS and MANGES (read; snotty RAMONES-core). Not bad—actually quite enjoyable—but the BREAKAWAYS are the bomb-diggity. I got their CDR a few months ago and played it until it died. This band is fucking amazing—equal parts RAMONES and DESCENDENTS, high snotty vocals, and the intensity of a bunch of high school delinquents in leather jackets. Jesus Christ, this is the band I wanted to start in high school. Bonus cool points for ripping of SABBATH in the guitar breakdowns for "Sayonara Wendy." This is my open invitation to the BREAKAWAYS to play my beach party any time they would like. (BM)
(the_breakaways@hotmail.com)





CAST ASIDE - "Overcome" EP

Heavy. Double bass. Straight edge. These guys contain members of DOWN TO NOTHING and DEAD SERIOUS, yet you would never know. Not unlike MADBALL or TERROR, CAST ASIDE play a much more brutal style of hardcore with a lot of fierce breakdowns. How come I have the feeling that this is not going to be the last time I use the phrase "not unlike MADBALL or TERROR"? I am making the early prediction right now that in the next couple years you're going to hear a big resurgence of this style going around in the straight edge scene. And CAST ASIDE are as qualified as anyone to usher in this new wave. (CC)
(Malfunction, www.malfunctionrecords.com)

CATARACT - "Great Days of Vengeance" CD

I've been hearing a bunch of good things about this Swiss band, and all I can say is—what's the big deal? You'd have to have never heard a single metalcore record in the last ten years to think these hackneyed riffs were anything note-worthy at all. Sounds like a watered-down ALL OUT WAR of five years ago. Sure the sound is super-heavy, but recording technology being what it is these days, that's not so special either. Any of their German contemporaries such as HEAVEN SHALL BURN do this exact same sound a million times better. (EL)
(Lifeforce)

THEE CERAMIC HOBS - "Shaolin Master" EP

I'm not copping an elitist trip when I say I must be the only person on the mag who could like this 7". It's sounds like a 1981 outtake from a lost Fuck Off Records tape comp. No? OK, it sounds like an Xpressway label band from 1994. Kinda. It's a cranky throbbing experimental psych-punk stagger that sounds like many things without being an exact copy. Do you like talking vocals? Here ya go. Wait, the last track sounds like LIGHTNING BEAT MAN. Sheesh! Hm, I know I have an old 7" by this "band" somewhere—this can't be a recent recording. Or maybe it's just timeless. (RW)
(Harbinger Sound, PO Box 7133, Nottingham, NG5 7WE, UK)

CHAOS Z - "Dunkle Strassen (1981-1995 Komplett)" 2xLP

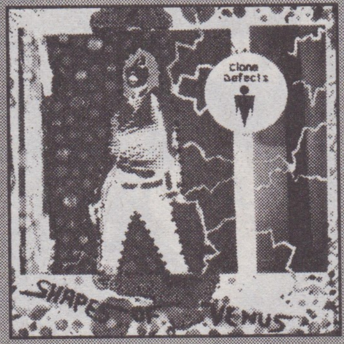
Weird System continues to crank out the reissues, this time bringing you the complete discography of Germany punk rockers CHAOS Z. If you've never heard them before, think WARSAW's gothic sensibilities mixed with the quick-paced melodic German punk sound. Think a rawer, much more punk version of early NEW MODEL ARMY to get a decent sonic context of what we're dealing with here. Highly recommended, as are all the recent Weird System reissues. (MT)
(Weird System, Alsterwiete 32, 20099 Hamburg, GERMANY, www.weirdsystem.de)

CHIODOS BROS. - "The Heartless Control Everything" CD

In a welcome development, it seems that emo-pop-punk (could I possibly have added any more fucking hyphens?) bands are starting to embrace the fact that their songs sound like they'd fit right in on the *Sixteen Candles* soundtrack. It takes a great deal of courage to dive off of the edge into "total cheese" territory, but damned if the CHIODOS BROS. haven't done it by adding synthesized drum parts, glockenspiel, and ENYA keyboards. If they could just drop the annoying THURSDAY screamo parts, this would be the perfect record to play while running through a field towards the object of your affection. Camera off, credits roll. Seriously, though, I like it. (MX)
(Search and Rescue, PO Box 8260, Ann Arbor, MI 48107, www.searchandrescuerecords.com)

THE CLIFTONS - "Rock Out" EP

This is definitely better than their side of the split with LOS OLVIDADOS. They've kicked it up a notch and are now fully emersed into the DWARVES-style fast and obnoxious punk. Solid shit. (HM)
(Stones Throw, 2658 Griffith Park Blvd. #504, Los Angeles, CA 90039-2520, TheCliftonsNPC@excite.com)



CLONE DEFECTS - "Shapes of Venus" CD

Second long player by this band of knuckle dragging lowbrows from the midwest, and what a suckerpunch of rock it is too. The bastard sons of the DEAD BOYS, SAINTS and RADIO BIRDMAN take off from where those folks left off, add some distortion, a whole lotta soul and fucking wreck the place. This band would knock your missus up, drink your whiskey, knock your teeth in and leave you with their rendition of the Otis Redding classic "That's How Strong My Love Is" ringing in your ears. Fantastic. (TB)
(In The Red, PO Box 208, 1118 W. Magnolia Blvd, Burbank, CA 91506, www.intheredrecords.com)

CLONE DEFECTS - "Shapes of Venus/Stick My Knife"

......fuck yeah, this little bitch is *good*!!!! I guess I'm on the right drugs for this one tonight.....*and how*!!!!....these are some pretty ugly-ass motherfuckers, no doubt.....but don't let it stop you gurls....they can play 'em just as good as Nick Lowe can....and their cocks are just as salty.....!!! This is some catchy/insane shit here...there's also a new LP....I wonder if this is just a prick-tease to something *great*?????....or just the cherry on a *big turd*....either way, this single moves me in all the right places....like my cock....!!! (SW)
(In The Red, PO Box 208, 1118 W. Magnolia Blvd, Burbank, CA 91506, www.intheredrecords.com)

CLOSER THAN KIN - "The Machineries of Breath" CD

God, this is fucking wretched. This is like finding a new Betamax tape and thinking, "Christ they still make these?" In this case, the unwelcome nostalgia is the kind of tepid metal-influenced tough-guy pseudo-melodic hardcore punk that New York/New England bands played in the late 80s/early 90s, when they hadn't quite gotten the mix right—the sort of thing that doesn't age well, nor gets re-created well. Totally uninteresting riffs and songs, with weak breakdowns and awful sung vocals in the choruses. I guess you can tell I didn't like this. (EL)
(Punktuation!, 400 SE 9th St, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33316, www.arcticmusicgroup.com)

COCKNEY REJECTS - "Out of the Gutter" CD

When a band's first two LPs from twenty years ago are considered classics as their first two "greatest hits" LPs are—incredible anthemic raw punk—where do you go from there? This disc of new material (with the Cockney back) is back in the right direction. Although there is a touch of their wannabe metal era, guitar-wise, this is a good anthemic punk release. This goes back to the SHAM 69 and CHELSEA sing-along days of punk. A strong return. (RL)
(Captain Oi)

COLORED RICE MEN - "New Animal Life" LP

I remember a 7" or a CD floating around by these guys circa late 90s and damn if the date on the back of this Japanese-born LP doesn't clearly state: 1999. The recording has a very live sound to it; it's fast punk rock with a horn/sax player valiantly attempting to hold his/her own with the rampaging beast that is COLORED RICE MEN. In other words, it works. Lyrics are a garble (natch), the style is non-metal thrash-leaning-toward-JOHN ZORN without solos and a solid guitar sound. Fans of RUINS and BOREDOMS would surely find this record worth hoarding in an air-tight vault. Oh wait! It's on a *Japanese* label, so only I get to hear it. *Sorry*! (RW) (Blood Sucker, #203 1-16-18 Kusunoki-cho Nishi-ku, Hiroshima, JAPAN)

COLORED RICE MEN - "Asphalt Death" LP

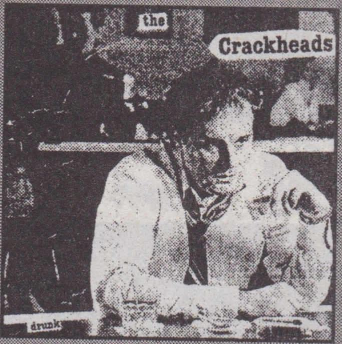
Alright, let's hear it for more wacked out Japanese punk. COLORED RICE MEN, turn the strangeness level up with this wild mix of straightforward punk rock and squirrely saxophone playing. I don't know about you but the only time I can remember hearing a saxophone in a punk song that I liked was *New York's Alright If You Like Saxophones* by FEAR. If you took the saxophone out of this COLORED RICE MEN release you would have a quality straight-up punk record. But I could not get past it and became too distracting for me. (RC)
(Blood Sucker, #203 1-16-18 Kusunoki-cho Nishi-ku, Hiroshima, JAPAN)

CONTRARIANS- "You Will Listen!" EP

1960s-styled R&B gangbang disguised with short haircuts and dolled-up in wraparound shades. The original tune ("Like a Fool", a jaunty ditty expressing a wellspring of post-high school resentment) is outclassed by the the covers (the WHEELS' sleazy "Bad Little Woman" and the UNUSUALS' "I'm a Walkin"). Like late-night reruns of *Bewitched,* they do not surprise, nor do they disappoint. (JH)
(Pure Vinyl, Sandgasse 8b, A 4020 Linz, AUSTRIA, fluchg.purev@aon.at)

THE COOL JERKS - "Whole Wide World/For a Little While"

.....I don't think this world needs another cover of the WRECKLESS ERIC classic, but oh well!!!!!!!!! .....these guys had to go and add to the pile......! Side two is a little noisy, ITR style.....if you know what I mean....., there's a catchy hook down there somewhere......not bad but not great.....not enough mojo to make my member moist....no sir! (SW)
(Misprint, PO Box 40211, Nashville, TN 37204, www.misprintrecords.com)

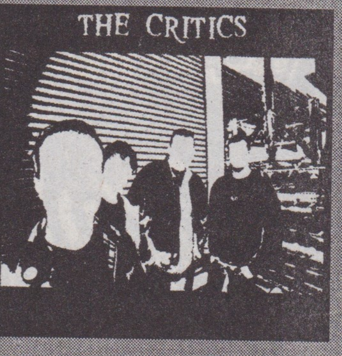


CORTEGE - "Young Soul Rebel" EP

More French oi for you to eat up. Quick-paced and kinda slickly melodic punk rock. So catchy that I find myself trying to sing along despite my total ignorance of the French language. In fact, the title track almost reminds me of something that could be played in the soundtrack to *Sixteen Candles,* or any other number of John Hughes movie. I like this a bunch. It's no COCKNEY REJECTS, but they could probably play with LEATHERFACE and not get booed off the state. (MT)
(Bords De Seine, BP85, 75561 Paris Ck 12, FRANCE, BDSkinhead@aol.com)

CRACKHEADS - "Drunk With Power" EP

Reopen Club OZ, cause the CRACKHEADS are a poor man's NAKED RAYGUN. The singer even sounds like Jeff Pezzati. A definite Chicago-influenced sound from these guys. I hear elements of GEAR, SLUDGEWORTH, and did I mention NAKED RAYGUN? Good stuff, hope to hear more... (AS)
(Dylaramma, 3218 Fullerton Ave. Apt 26, Chicago, IL 60647)

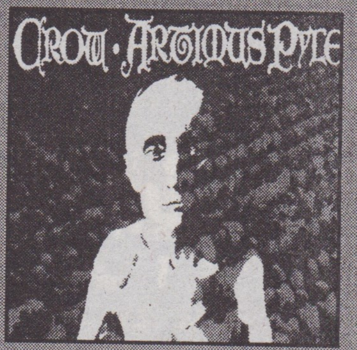


CRESS - "Propaganda & Lies" CD

Another collection of the works of the modern Anarcho-punk band CRESS, though not as complete as the double LP released earlier this year. Here we have the excellent *Monuments* LP, tracks from the split with DOOM and their lone EP. Still killer stuff in the vein of CONFLICT, early KILLING JOKE, and the whole stable of CRASS records bands. (MT)
(Flat Earth, 145-149 Cardigan Rd, Leeds, LS6 1LJ, UK, www.flatearth.free-online.co.uk)

CRI D'ALERTE - "50 Cl." EP

Fuck yes! Bords de Seine just keeps pouring out great skinhead music! The French skins and punks CRI D'ALERTE have a barn-storming good batch of "street punk stout" tunes for you! For three years these guys have been polishing a sound that incorporates good elements for renown bands such as WARRIOR KIDS and CHARGE 69. The amalgamation has come to fruition on the *50 Cl.* EP. There's good chugging street punk about beer drinking on this highly refined EP. We get another winner from this great label! (BR)
(Bords de Seine, BP 85-75561, Paris CX12, FRANCE, www.bordsdeseine.fr.st)



CRITICS - "Pull Your Head In" EP

Good, solid, catchy punk from Down Under—Melbourne to be precise. It's upbeat and chipper, not unlike a faster COCK SPARRER or a less aggro COCKNEY REJECTS, though I wouldn't call it street punk. (AD)
(Out of the Loop, PO Box 222, Tuart Hill, W.A. 6939, AUSTRALIA)

CROW/ARTIMUS PYLE - split EP

This is the American reissue of this record that came out on the Mangrove (Japan) some time ago. I totally remember ARTIMUS PYLE playing this first track as an opener quite live... Man, this shit rocks! For some reason, ARTIMUS PYLE has always reminded me of HIS HERO IS GONE played at a higher tempo (seriously...try turning the pitch down a bunch and you'll see what I'm talking about!), though I actually like ARTIMUS PYLE's style a bit more. ARTIMUS PYLE seem to sound better every time I hear them—their stuff here is no exception. As for Japan's CROW, they do a CRUCIFIX cover and one original. Both songs benefit from good production that the previous CROW releases lack. Though some purists will obviously prefer the early blown-out recordings, I think this shift in sound sort of adds an interesting element to the band. I'm rambling, pick this up either way. (SP)
(Prank, PO Box 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141-0892, www.prankrecords.com)

D.S.B. - "Battle Into Invisible Zone" CDEP

To be honest I'm kinda let down by this release. Their speedy attack combined with a mild epic sensibility is still there, but this comes off sounding a but more disjointed than their prior releases, especially when compared to their monstrous *Wings Struggle To Survive* LP. For those not familiar with their sound, think something along the lines of DEATHREAT or BALANCE OF TERROR, but more melodic. (MT)
(Discrete, PO Box 31 Ogaki, Post Office, Ogaki-City, Gifu, JAPAN, discrete@pop07.odn.ne.jp)

DACKELBLUT - "Schutzen" LP

Compared to their *Dackelkblut* LP, with its memorable tunes full of diminished chords and memorable guitar progressions, this is more straightforward but still relatively strong, still sounding eerily close to middle-period EBBA GRON—particularly the vocals. In these urgent, tense, mid-speed tunes, DACKELBUT still shows pretty interesting guitarwork, which veers away from standard powerchord cliches. Above average. (SS)
(Schiffen, Reeperbahn 63, 20359 Hamburg, GERMANY, www.schiffen.de)

DACKELBLUT - LP

Mr. Spinali hits the nail on the head with his EBBA GRON comparison. On this, their eponymous LP, Deutsch punx DACKELBLUT crank out 13 tracks of powerful melodic punk that fans of LEATHERFACE, NO CHOICE, MANIFESTO JUKEBOX, or HÜSKER DÜ would be doing themselves a favor to track down. Killer. (MT)
(Schiffen, Reeperbahn 63, 20359 Hamburg, GERMANY, www.schiffen.de)

THE DAMAGE DONE - "Never Wash Away" EP

This is some quality finger-pointing straightedge hardcore from the West Coast. The music is fairly fast, but has a lot of melody incorporated throughout the EP. The production is clean and the vocals are gruff. In the insert they thank MOUTHPIECE and CHAIN OF STRENGTH for inspiration on one of the songs. That should give you a clear idea of where this band is coming from. (RC)
(Western Front, PO Box 24459, Los Angeles, CA 90024-0459, www.westernxfront.com)

DAN MELCHIOR'S BROKE REVUE - "Andover, Duluth, London" EP

DAN MELCHIOR'S BROKE REVUE are adored by many (Carolyn?), dismissed by some, unknown to others. Rather than delve into that thicket of loaded mousetraps, I'll list contents: four cover tunes wrapped in a brown cardboard sleeve—tunes by the likes of the SUBWAY SECT's Vic Godard ("Chain Smoking"), Bobert Dylan ("From a Buick 6"), Elle Presley ("I Just Sing"), and the SMALL FACES ("Watcha Gonna Do About It"—a straight take, rather than the SEX PISTOLS/HEADCOATS abused stepchild reading). It's a 12" EP with oversized, roomy groves: performances are optimized. Souls are bought and sold. (JH)
(Version City, 805 Union St. Apt. 2, Brooklyn, NY 11215, www.versioncity.com)

DANCING LEPERS/RECKLESS DEERHUNTERS - Split EP

This split EP was released by the Burn Brandon Collective in Florida. The financing for it (and for all Burn Brandon records and zines) came from benefit shows and donations, and it is free plus postage. The DANCING LEPERS are very endearing with lyrics and attitude reminiscent of *Fresh Fruit*-era DEAD KENNEDYS and a sound like your little brother practicing with his first punk band in the garage. The RECKLESS DEERHUNTERS have more of an old-school hardcore sound and can play better, but they don't excite me as much as the DANCING LEPERS. (DP)
(Sound Idea, PO Box 3204, Brandon, FL 33509, sndidea@ix.netcom.com)

DAY OF THE DEAD/DAMAGE DONE - split EP

Great international hardcore split here, Portugal's DAY OF THE DEAD delivers four furious tracks (including a CRUDOS cover) of in-your-face non-metallic and only slightly youth crew style hardcore. The vocals here are the highlight for me—which is not to take anything away from the rest of the band, cause the songs are all killer—the singer has the perfect balance of ripping his guts out and conveying emotion (this is *not* emo, please don't misunderstand). This is the first I've heard of this band, and it's a fucking awesome introduction. California's DAMAGE DONE live up to all the raves I've heard about them, and these three songs (as well as their EP also reviewed in this issue) are floor punching madness at its finest. Breakdowns galore can be found here, along with thought-inspiring lyrics and fast youth crew hardcore and...well, more breakdowns. If you got something good, fucking go with it, right? (WN)
(Goodwill/Dario Adamic, C.P. 15319, 00143 Roma Laurentino, ITALY)

DEADLINE/BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS - "Any Fate but Submission" CD EP

Despite some of the most embarrassingly naff cover art I've had the misfortune to stare at for several months (badly painted US and UK flags, together with an eagle,and some cannons!?), this EP is rather good! For a skinhead band, the UK's DEADLINE turn in two throwaway tough-guy (well, minus their female singer, I guess) hardcore tracks, and a truly sublime melodic slow-paced rocker, very reminiscent of PENETRATION, which makes it all better again. The BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS turn in three raging tracks much akin to SLAUGHTER AND THE DOGS more upbeat numbers, complete with some excellent lead-work, and including a suitably spunky cover of TOM PETTY's "American Girl." Makes we want to hear more from both bands. (RK)
(Haunted Town,www.hauntedtownrecords.com)

DEATH FROM ABOVE - "Heads Up" LP

Six short songs at 45 rpm. It's mostly hipster, retro rock 'n' roll with a heavily distorted quality on everything. All the songs are up-tempo and bass heavy. I'm "so tired of sluts coming to us in the clubs with their cocaine..." as well. (PA)
(Ache, PO Box 138, 1001 W. Broadway #101, Vancouver, BC, CANADA, www.acherecords.com)

DEGRADATION - "Homeward Bound" LP

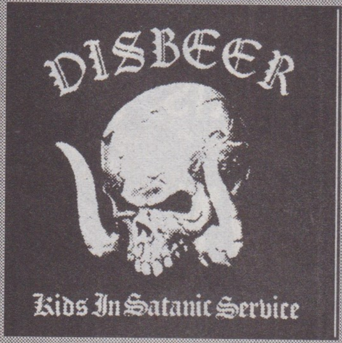
Did someone say "Wall of death"? DEGRADATION play mid-paced straight edge hardcore packed with mosh parts and breakdowns. Think BATTERY, TEN YARD FIGHT... or take your pick of any other of the countless mid-90s CHAIN OF STRENGTH worship bands. Yeah, listening to this record is fun and entertaining, but goddamn, I can't believe I ever took any of this stuff even a little bit seriously. If you're a fan of the straight edge hardcore thing, well, mosh away, my friend. You'll love this one. (VH)
(Darfelder Strasse 31, 48727 Billerbeck, GERMANY, www.competitionrecords.com)

DEVIL DOLLS - "We Are the..." CD

Item: Australian quintet fronted by one Mirella Doll and backed by four sunbaked hangdogs. Their cover of CHEAP TRICK's "He's a Whore" sums 'em up pretty succintly: deep-saturated sounds with the big ol' guitars and glitter-dusted DOLLisms. A grain too profesh for my tastes, it is. (JH)
(Corduroy, 38 Advantage Rd., Highett, Victoria 3190, AUSTRALIA, www.corduroy.com.au)

DICKIES - "Still Got Live, Even If You Don't Want It" CD
DICKIES fans (of which I am one) will be glad to hear that the *We Aren't the World* tape is now (officially) available on vinyl (and CD,) that's right, ROIR have released it with a new title on lovely pink wax. This, along with the Captain Oi! re-releases of *The Incredible Shrinking Dickies* and *The Dawn of the Dickies*, and the re-release and renaming of *Great Dictations* as *The Dickies Singles Collection* (or something equally as imaginatively titled) means that you kids can now get yer grubby mitts on this great band's back catalog without shelling out large bucks to pasty-faced socially challenged record traders. The DICKIES (to give them their full name) were the drug-crazed cartoon and comic book flip side to the "serious" punk explosion of late 70s Los Angeles. More dumb than threatening, more horny than angst ridden, they released a slew of colored vinyl 7"s on A&M (a little birdy told me that Leonard or one the band had an uncle or something at A&M and that's the reason the group was given a contract, but I have no concrete evidence) and hit the top of the charts in England with their zany rendition of the *Banana Splits* theme. What punk historians on this side of the pond probably fail to understand is that the *Banana Splits* show itself was huge in the British Isles at that time, and that, more than the DICKIES musical prowess is why they hit it so big in Britain. The rest is literally history, but you can still see them these days and they are one of the few bands from that period still actually worth seeing... Anyway, the record is fine, better for fans than first timers as it has a lot of (very well recorded) live stuff and demos, a better starting place to hear their trademark *Wacky Races*-style punk pop would be the singles collection or the re-releases of *Incredible*.... and *Dawn*. This is marvelous nonetheless. (AD)
(ROIR, 611 Broadway, Ste. 411, New York, NY 10012)

DIRTY CHARLIE - "Hydra" EP
You had to be there. I wasn't either. But a four track was, so here "we" are. Nine tracks raw-ass punk fem-vox rant with analog instrumentation. Boredom is successfully held at bay through the sheer desire not to be bored. Wait, it's *pain* being held at bay here. Yes, this is a record to play when you have a blinding hangover. Only then are you truly "there." Punk like *Germicide*. (RW)
(Raw Sugar, PO Box 53011, New Orleans, LA 70153)

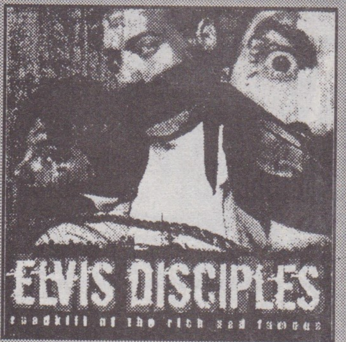


DISBEER - "Kids In the Satanic Service" CD
DISBEER from France unleashes the musical hounds and sets the pace for an all-out assault of driving crustcore. Buzzing guitars wrapped in studded belts hammer through those familiar chords that we all know and love. Growling vocals spit out lyrics about punx, chaos, drinking, and Satan. While there is nothing too mind-blowing here, in all honesty it ended up being a lot better than I expected! (RC)
(Murder, Olivier Lacoste, BP 11-33023 Bordeaux Cedex, FRANCE)

DISCIPLINE - "Saints & Sinners" CD
A Belgian quartet of follically challenged chaps belt out 12 tracks of decent, though hardly earth-shattering skinhead punk. They definitely lean toward the more driving punk sound of ONE WAY SYSTEM or RED ALERT than the more typical speedy rock and mob choruses of the likes of the BUSINESS. A good production, and a suitably gravelly voiced vocalist certainly help. (RK)
(GMM, PO Box 15234, Atlanta, GA 30333)

DISREANTIYOUTHHELLCHRISTBASTARDASSMANX - "Power Violence R.I.P." EP
Short, fast, loud, power-violence styled thrash from these Escondido, CA, punkers with one of the longest names in punkdom. Musically they sound like a mix of early ASSHOLE PARADE (demo era) with early CHARLES BRONSON except that Colin RRMF's vocal style (a sarcastic sounding falsetto?) are a lot more annoying, to my ears, than the early CB vocals. I preferred his "singing" on the B-side over the A-side. Lyrics are about alienation, rent-a-cops, love denied, some kid named Greg, some club sucking, etc. The cover art of a backhoe pushing around tons of 90s power-violence records is cool. (WM)
(Thrashbot 736 S. Chestnut St, Escondido, CA 92025)

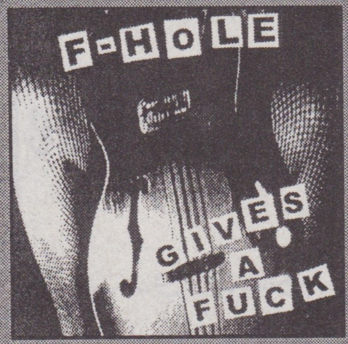
DISRESPECT/SIDEKICK - split EP
SIDEKICK come out swinging with some fairly generic mid-tempo East Coast style hardcore, along the lines of SHEER TERROR. Not overly metal, but not overly exciting either. DISRESPECT go down pretty much the same path, with a touch more metal. More along the lines of a bad EARTH CRISIS rip-off. Sorry guys, bands like this are a dime-a-dozen, so you really need to pick it up if you are going to stand out. (RC)
(CrapChords, Hansi Haug, Bismarkstr. 44, 73262 Reichenbach/Fils; philow@aol.com)

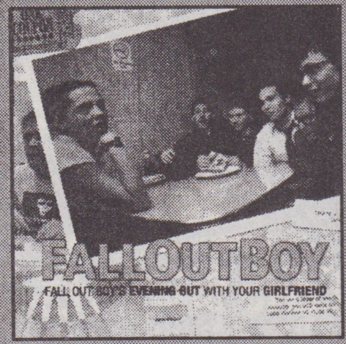


ELEVENTEEN - " In Then Air" CD
An up-and-coming group in the pop-punk-with-emo-overtones vein. Very pop, fueled by strong vocals. This reminds me of UNWRITTEN LAW and SENSEFIELD, musically. Produced by J. Robbins, this NorCal band seems to be primed for the big time. (RL)
(Sessions, www.sessionsrecords.com)

ELVIS DISCIPLES - "Roadkill of the Rich and Famous" - CD
I thought this was gonna suck balls, judging solely on its slick packaging. But it didn't—in fact, it was actually all right. Decent 80s LA-style melodic punk rock in the vein of AGENT ORANGE, the DICKIES, NOFX (not from LA or the early 80s), and SLOPPY SECONDS (yeah, I know they're from Indiana). Nothing totally mind-blowing, but nonetheless, a refreshing record in the mix of all the generic and mediocre shit I've been hearing lately. (AS)
(Lascivious, PO Box 804, Montebello, CA 90640)

ENDLESS STRUGGLE – "Till the End" CD
Spikey punk from Salt Lake City. It's pretty much by-the-numbers fast paced hardcore punk. My main complaint is that the lyrics don't seem to really say anything. C'mon, you're walking around with a mohawk, George Bush Jr. is in the White House, a war is about to start (or will probably already be over by the time this comes to print) and you have nothing to say on the matter? That's why I prefer bands like A GLOBAL THREAT who at least walk the walk as well as talk the talk. As a bespectacled fellow once sang "Are you prepared to die for your beliefs or just to dye your hair?" (AD)
(A-F, PO Box 71266, Pittsburgh PA 15213)





ETAE - "Rotten to the Core" EP

You may notice the fucking flood of Japanese hardcore in this issue; well over a dozen releases, and a good month to get out your pen, paper and international money order. But this one comes from a Connecticut label, so you can save on postage! Hailing from Hokkaido (Japan's north island), ETAE are lead guitar laden hardcore along the lines of MUSTANG or CRUDE (I guess there's a "Hokkaido Sound") with mostly mid-tempo driving hardcore, snarled vocals, and guitar solos all over the place—this EP will keep your toes tapping all the way through. Treat yourself, and then write Bloodsucker and get their *Don't Throw* EP, also reviewed this month. (WN)

(Cries Of Pain, PO Box 1004, Windsor, CT 06095)

ETAE - "Don't Throw..." EP

These Japanese kids throw me one hell of a curve ball this month. ETAE play mid-paced punk packed with melodic guitar parts, interesting hooks, and completely random IRON MAIDEN-style solos. The layering of gruff vocals with harmonizing "whoo-oh" backups is really odd. The way I'm describing this might make you think of JAWBREAKER, but it's really the farthest thing from. The way their songs fit together is completely random and bizarre in a disturbing BEACH BOY'S *Love You* kind of way. A part of me is very much into this just because it's so unlike what I usually listen to. But the more I hear, the more I'm giving into the other part of me that thinks it's absolutely ridiculous, awful music that I hope to never hear again. (VH)

(Show Ikeda, 13-9 Honcho, Hakodate, Hokkaido, JAPAN)

EXPLODING HEARTS - "Modern Kicks/Busy Signals"

The EXPLODING HEARTS are working a tried-and-mostly-true Desperate Teenage MODERN LOVERS kinda power-pop angle. "Modern Kicks" is a fully-conceived "song" with a beginning, middle, end, and words about girls. It's not too late to order a bouquet. The HEARTS are tiptoeing around a clean-scrubbed RUBINOOS TEENAGE HEAD sound and manage to pull off the Wide-Eyed Innocent routine (never mind what they're like as human beings). Fun and/pop.(JH)

(Pelado, 521 W. Wilson #C103, Costa Mesa, CA 92727)

F-HOLE "Gives a Fuck" EP

I remember hearing SQUAT's record in '96 or something—in fact, I remember the SQUAT song, "It's All Over," that former member Lizzy covers on this EP, and if memory doesn't fail me, it sounds better now: all raw and shitty-sounding, but with the hooks still in order. The rest of this EP is awesome, too, trashy, pissed, and fun, with no gimmick except for fuck shit up! (and that's no gimmick at all). All three sing, it sounds like a crowd of hoodlums, and it works. Also, this is a perfect example of cheap lo-fi recording gone exactly right. From SF; unfortunately I haven't seen them, probably because they seem to play primarliy in bars, which tend to be expensive and otherwise a pain in the ass. Perhaps an exception is in order... (AC)

(Your Permanent Records)

FALLOUTBOY - "FalloutBoy's Evening Out With Your Girlfriend" CD

The cover art to this is almost witty. And the music is almost not bad. 9 tracks of melodic indie-pop. If I was being charitable, I'd say they approximated GAMEFACE (in the days when GAMEFACE were actually good). I suspect they really want to be signed by Vagrant. And yes, they have a shitty acoustic track on there too. I doubt this'll make the college charts. (RK)

(Uprising, PO Box 42259, Philadelphia, PA 19104)

THE FAVOURITES - "SOS" LP

In this retrospective commemorating the start of the band in 1979, the FAVOURITES wallow in pop, their tunes bobbing to a style that roughly a cross between the MONKEES and NICK LOWE. Slow tunes like "I See You" come across as rather limp, but the trio partially redeem themselves with their standout cover of "S.O.S." and a nice instrumental track. I'm as susceptible to nostalgia as the next person, but these guys don't quite do it for me. (SS)

(no address)

FIFTY-FOOT COMBO - "Caffeine" CD

Five backlight Belgians of various shapes and sizes, and not a singer among them. The FIFTY-FOOT COMBO opt out of words and opt in for the international/cross-cultural appeal of instrumental sleaze and lounge. Sax and Hammond organ compete with dueling guitars and novelty audio samples. Sometimes the COMBO build up a head of steam, and others they slink into a middling jam session that leaves me blunted and bored. Titles such as "Sugar No Cream", "The Great Caffeine Comedown", "Black and Hot Like My Women" and "Buzzz" clue you on the theme: Man or Java Man? (JH)

(Drunkabilly, PB 87, 9050 Ledeberg 1, BELGIUM, drunkabilly@planetinternet.be)

THE FLASH EXPRESS - "Ride the Flash Express/Feel These Blues"

This here is honest to goodness punk 'n' blues 'n' roll, with an emphasis on the punk, the rock, and the blues. At times it reminds me of late 70s stuff like RICHARD HELL. Other times it goes back even further to the mid or late 70s or even the late 60s. It is very STOOGES-like. It's mid-tempo and catchy, but it's some kinda white-guy funkiness and has the sense of urgency that separates the exceptional from the mediocre. I know that "white-guy funkiness" comment probably doesn't sound like much of an endorsement, but it is. Trust me on this one. (KK)

(Head Line, 7708 Melrose Ave, Los Angeles, CA, 90046, www.headlinerecords.com)

THE FLYING DUTCHMEN - "Live Devil's Club" EP

Trashy (as in sounds as though the microphone was in a trash can) recordings of a garage band that would be derivative if it weren't for the "musicians'" inability to curb their enthusiasm. Showing that there's no accounting for taste, I think this disc is swell (then again, I probably have a couple of bent chromosomes that make me like this stuff in the first place). (DD)

($3 ppd: Jesse Lortz, 20720 SE 192nd St., Renton, WA 98058)

FOURSTROKE - "Big Smoke & Mirrors/My Way"

Squeezing by the *MRR* review policy by a hair this 7" is *rock* with a huge neon flashing "R." Fuzzed out Sabbath riffs with a touch of the MC5 this band may not be strictly "punk", but anyone into Scandinavian cockrockers like the HELLACOPTERS would do well to drop those weenys and check out some real fuckin' rock 'n' roll. (TB)

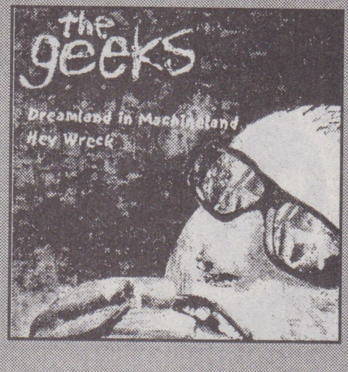
(www.outoftheloop.com.au)

FUN - "Speed Like a Hammer" 10"

Four long songs that sound very much like SHELLAC. The drums are to a tee, the guitar has the same tinny sound and style, but maybe the bass isn't as prominent. The vocals are a mix of talking, screaming, and singing. The songs are very well put together and played, so if you haven't had your fill of SHELLAC, then this is well worth getting. (PA)
(Sharp, Hakaniemenkatu 9 a 1, 00530 Helsinki, FINLAND, www.fun.ven.cc)

GEEKS - "Dreamland in Machineland/Hey Wreck"

Before (probably) you or (definitely) I started seeing bands in seedy North Beach nightclubs and sneaking Valium in to Gilman St. knitting bees, the San Francisco Bay Area was home to a veritable army of wrong-minded, outright *alien* bands that never woulda seen the dark of night were it not for the no-talent-required p. rock scene. Bands like Nob Hill duo CHROME, the INFLATABLE BOY CLAMS, B-TEAM, TUXEDO MOON, RED ASPHALT, the immortal CLUB FOOT ORCHESTRA—unconciously arty, resolutely anti-commercial. Freaks and geeks, all. The GEEKS (appropriately enough) were a noisy, punchy chamber orchestra that incorporated New York No Wave, basement drone, deep-space buzz and lyrics about androids and train crashes. Sounds pretty good for an unearthed fossil: "Dreamland in Machineland" is a left-brain drone; "Hey Wreck" is a calculated punch to the kidneys (oof). From '79, I'm told. Ferret it out and hurt. (JH)
(S-S, 1114 21st St, Sacramento, CA 94814)

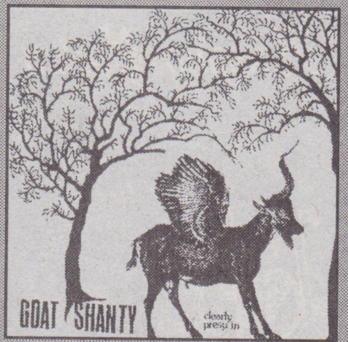


GENERATION 69 "Condemned Citizens" EP

Mid-paced and melodic hardcore from these skinheads from Singapore. I know it's probably not the case, but I really hope the song "One More for the Bois" is about hanging out with trannies (Boi=tranny, in case you didn't know). A fine release which seems to go that extra length lyrically to set themselves apart from the dodgy elements of the skinhead world. (MT)
(Bords De Seine, BP 85, 75561 Paris CX 12, FRANCE)

GOAT SHANTY - "Clearly Presp In" EP

Ahhhhh, GOAT SHANTY. Fukken love 'em! The East Coast's premier guitar/drum/vocal onslaught delivers the goods once again with nine songs filled with chaos and blurry hardcore. Don't think metal or grindcore—these kids are way too far out on their own limb for that, but fans of both will eat this shit up. Try to imagine INFEST, but way noisier (read: messier) and without that element of "we're going to kill you just as soon as this record is over." GOAT SHANTY will just come over to your house and act like nincompoops...just the way I like it. Fucking great record from a new label from Maine; big thumbs up to anyone whose first three releases include this gem and the SHANK CD—nice work. (WN)
(Out of Limits, PO Box 526, Springvale, ME 04083, www.outoflimits.com)



GOOD MORNING/DEATH FIRST - split EP

"Sitting at the bar is a social disease..." states GOOD MORNING, and I couldn't agree more as they unleash four tracks of boombox-style-recording snarling hardcore punk. However the real winner of this split would be DEATH FIRST, who start off their side with "Fuck street punkers who sympathize with Nazis" and then tear into four tracks of chaotic punk with male/female vocals that brings to mind a less metallic CALLOUSED. (MT)
(Dilapidated, 209 E. 25th. Apt. 1D, Minneapolis, MN 55404)

GOODWILL - "That Was a Moment" CD

I'm always slightly suspicious of bands that credit the "cover models" in their artwork, and biased against those that actually list their legal representation. Who cares? Or are you just making it easier to facilitate me suing you guys for crimes against music. Never fear though, "shirts done by Relaxor Graphics." Thank fuck for Relaxor Graphics. 10 tracks of well executed, utterly redundant college-rock, emo-pop, including the (now) obligatory embarrassingly whiny acoustic track. If anyone reading this actually really likes MOVELIFE, NEW FOUND GLORY and such drek, you'll probably dig this too. (RK)
(Negative Progression, www.negativeprogression.com)

GORLILLAS - "Gatecrasher/Gorilla Got Me"

Mid-tempo, mid-70s garage pop. Nothing to get worked up over. The A-side is a vocal number, the B-side is an instrumental—neither one did anything for me. (BM)
(Munster, PO Box 18107, Madrid 28080, SPAIN)

GRAIN USA - "Catchy Like a Cold" EP

This is, indeed, "catchy like a cold," bringing the melodies like a more new wave MR. T EXPERIENCE. And no, it's not that dark, CURE-type of new wave that everyone and their mother seems to want to replicate these days; think DURAN DURAN, or something of that nature. No keyboards here, though. The same two songs are on both sides, and one of them is a brief instrumental. My diagnosis: wait until you have more songs to put out records. Then the world can rejoice in your pop goodness without being annoyed at how short the damn thing is. (MX)
(Disposable Pop Revolution, www.disposablepoprevolution.com)

GRUK - CD

GRUK does hardcore in such a way that will blast-beat your heart out. Similar to other Chico bands like the PAWNS, Rachel's vocals definitely make you want to dance in a circle looking tough. (MM)
(www.geocities.com/ryanlalbangh/entergrule.html)

GUN CLUB - "Horse Power" LP

Numbered 039 out of 300, meaning that it's a preprogrammed collectors' item and soon-to-be eBay staple. The GUN CLUB are, no kidding, one of the six or seven best bands to emerge from the wilds of Los Angeles in the later 1970s (others being X, the FLESHEATERS, GERMS, SCREAMERS, maybe BLACK FLAG *and...?*) Jeffrey Lee Pierce and his revolving door of supporting actors did plenty to usher in a brave new world of bolo ties and Blues Explosions: unfortunately their output was limited to one drop-dead classic LP (*Fire of Love*) and a couple worth-owning follow ups (*Miami* and *Las Vegas Story*) along with a lot of weak later material that's best shunned. *Horse Power* is an LP worth of good-sounding live songs played in front of a London crowd in 1987—the big hits are all accounted for ("Fire Spirit", "Sex Beat", "She's Like Heroin to Me", etc.) and they sound fine.

The late Mr. Lee Pierce has that near-breathless quality in his voice—music-wise it's the Kid Congo line-up, and they're all in the proverbial notch. Fans should check it out: greenhorns should buy *Fire of Love* at the first opportunity. (JH)
(Alien, gunclub@alwills.demon.co.uk)

GURD - "Encounter" CD
I don't what these guys were thinking sending this to *MRR*—there is nothing even remotely punk about this record. This is the kind of cheesy metal that even devout metalheadz shouldn't be caught dead listening to. Re-hashing decade-old PANTERA riffs at half-speed, and wussified down to "rock" simplicity—argh, god, why even bother continuing this review—there's no way in hell you'd listen to more than 12 seconds of this even if you paid full-price for it. (EL)
(Diehard, Vindegade 101, 5000 Odense C, DENMARK)

H.K./KGS - split EP
H.K. sings their brand of English with a heavily accent (thankfully, we have translations in both English and Kanji); their standout tune is "Catch the Freedom," an aggressive pop-punker with an ADOLESCENTS-style guitar attack. KGS also offers two songs—chunky, variable-speed HC with RAW POWER vocals and great lo-fi production. (It was recorded at their house.) Recommended. (SS)
(Rebelabel, no address)

HANGING ROTTEN - CD
Interesting sludge/grind band here from North Carolina, with ex-members of SEVEN FOOT SPLEEN. Their songs are either long, slow stoner riffing tunes, or sub-20-second blasting grind bursts. They pull off both styles nicely—like maybe GRIEF and BENUMB trading off tracks. They also achieve a nice big heavy, noisy (but not too noisy) sound with only bass, drums, and vocals. Fans of stuff like CATHETER, SOILENT GREEN, maybe DESPISE YOU, and other stoner/grind combo types will dig this. (EL)
(Voice Production Asia/Meconium, 814 Azalea Ave, Black Mountain, NC 28711)

HARKONEN - "Shake Harder Boy" CD
HARKONEN have been plugging away for several years...I've seen them twice in San Francisco, and both shows were almost empty, but they poured buckets of sweat onto the floor and gave a treat to all who could be bothered to show up, and never seemed put off by playing to no one, something I always admire in a band. HARKONEN one part hardcore, one part rock and roll, and ten parts tight pants and good haircuts...you know, the stuff that people way more attractive than myself shake their asses and bob their heads too. Plenty of heaviness, and healthy doses of noisy "soundscapes," or something like that. I really like this disc, although there are quite a few moments during *Shake Harder Boy* that scream "MTV Buzzbin," but I guess the Buzzbin would be a better place with bands like this in it. (WN)
(HydraHead, PO Box 990248, Boston, MA 02199)

THE HENTCHMEN - "One Up!" EP
I am sorry that I always assumed the HENTCHMEN were some frat rock band. I've been racking my brain trying to figure out where I got that stupid idea. In the meantime, I've been making up for lost time and I am so glad to see a brand new single from these guys. Garage rock in a truly great style. The singer has a great distinctive voice. I recognize "LeSabre Radar" from their latest LP *Three Times Infinity*. I still find it cute when guys sing songs about their cars. (CK)
(Keystone)

HINT HINT - "Sex *Is* Everything" 12"
Absolutely unaccidental West Coast art school rock. The guitar, often played more like a xylophone, the keyboards (sometimes set on a "space"/moog setting?) and the lovely full-color matte don't convince me. No, I'm not convinced. There are some PHANTOM LIMBS tinny vocal things and escalations of intensity, but minus the madness and I'm thinking, minus the punk energy. Older influences land on or around old Factory Records (JOY DIVISION or STRANGLERS); jolty, depressing dance music with studiously disconcerting live moves, I expect, like the one where the singer's hand passes in front of his eyes, or the one where the singer's legs stay stuck together and he gyrates as if one-legged. Slick, very slick—it may very well convince you. (AC)
(Cold Crush, PO Box 348, Hollywood, CA 90078, www.coldcrushrecords.com)

HIGGINS – "Commercial Brake" CD
HIGGINS is Andy Higgins, a guy from England who plays guitar and sings anti-commercialism/authority songs with intelligence and a sense of humor. It's okay but I'm afraid it's no BILLY BRAGG. (AD)
(JSNTGM, PO Box 1025, Blackpool, FY3 0FO, UK)

HOLLY TREE - "Presents the British Punk Classics Greatest Shits" CD
Wait a second... this isn't the JAM, the STIFF LITTLE FINGERS or the REZILLOS?!!! Could've fooled me. HOLLY TREE cover eighteen British punk classics so well that you'll be fooled. A hilarious intro of phone calls to GENERATION X, the CLASH and the SEX PISTOLS sheds some light on why those bands are missing from this CD. Me likey. (HM)
(Silly Sally, www.hollytree.com.br)

HOLLYWOOD HATE - "Product of our Environment" LP
At first I thought that this was another one of those old bands that have resurfaced to take advantage of current trends in teenage culture, but then I realized that I was thinking of the HOLLYWOOD SQUARES, not HOLLYWOOD HATE. This is faster and more rockin' than your average LA/Long Beach fare (there's no address for the band here, but from the tattoos and Raiders shirt I'm guessing they're from down that way), which isn't surprising given that they're apparently made up of members of VERBAL ASSAULT and CONDEMNED TO DEATH. This has more in common with the likes of SMUT PEDDLERS, BONECRUSHER, and DISCONTENT than 80s skate punk, though like I say...it's faster. If you like your punk rock tough, fast, hard, and beer-drenched, than this won't disappoint. (AD)
(TKO, 3126 W. Cary St, #303 Richmond, VA 23221)

HOUSE ON FIRE - EP

Some of us are still mourning the demise of PANTHRO UK UNITED 13 who were one of the best bands to come out of Florida...ever. Fear not little ones, for I have found an adequate replacement in HOUSE ON FIRE. Featuring Alex Ulloa (vocalist of PANTRO) with folks from UNITAS and DISCOUNT this band rocks in the same "Gainesville band meets PEGBOY" way that PANTHRO did. A little more rock but still epic and catchy like his old band, this is a triumphant return for Ulloa and a great fucking EP—can't wait for the LP! (TB)
(1234 Go!, 420 Wall St #206, Seattle, WA 98121)

IMPRACTICAL COCKPIT - "Trashed is Good" LP

GOD IS MY COCKPIT anyone? Not really, but the sort of mistakes this band has enshrined to vinyl bring up all sorts of mid-90s memories for me. Good, fucked up memories of bands that couldn't play attempting to create something new out of raw desire and lousy drugs. Sort of the HALF JAPANESE ethic filtered down through 25 years of struggle and thousands of beat-up used records. Good the way the unjustly ignored CORRECTIONS 7" is good. It's, yes, another "mess" record this month but it's not one you're expected to clean up after, just experience. So cross your arms and smile. I would say there was something in the New Orleans water these days if it weren't so immediately obvious. (RW)
($6 ppd: (no checks!) TRD WD., PO Box 52096, New Orleans, LA 70152)

INTRO5PECT – "Intro5pect" CD

Wait a minute, what the hell is this? Punk with keyboards? This is weird, obviously ATARI TEENAGE RIOT and HELEN LOVE spring to mind, but what you've got here is your typical basic run-of-the-mill anarcho-punk/electronica thing, y'know kinda like ANTI-FLAG mixed with drum and bass, you've heard it a thousand times before. That was a joke… I've never heard anything quite like this before. I mean, I'm not sure I'll honestly ever listen to this again but right now but I like it. It's sure as hell better than anything else I've heard on this label. They've got fine political lyrics and they definitely get 10-out-of-10 for originality, I just hope they know that originality doesn't win you many friends. It's good to see the younger current generation of punks start to broaden the sound, that may have most of your *MRR* writers acting like vampires caught in daylight but I think it makes things more a lot more interesting. On second thoughts I will definitely listen to this again, in fact I'll listen to it every time one of my friends comes round because they've got to hear this. (Hey! They sampled ZOUNDS! Cool!) Thumbs up (and *good luck with that!*) (AD)
(A-F, PO Box 71266, Pittsburgh, PA 152113)

JED WHITEY/IRON BOSS - split EP

I'm looking at the pic sleeve and the insert and I'm skeptical, even frightened. Mohawks, long hair, UFO t-shirts, full chops... Back in the day, these were the kind of guys that the punks would beat the shit out of. Actually, they were the guys that would beat the shit out of the punks. Professional courtesy dictates that I can't—or at least shouldn't—write the entire review without actually listening to the disc, so hear goes. JED WHITEY. Hmmm. This actually isn't all that bad. There are some metal influences, which make it sound a little tinny, but deep down it's some pretty decent, faster-paced, full throttle punk rock. IRONBOSS. Hmmm. There's only one track and it sounds like a metal cover from the late 70s, but they claim it to be an original. Oh, they try to dress it up in a punk outfit, but you can't fool me. The fucking singer looks Axl Rose. Maybe this is supposed to be funny. Would that make it suck any less? (KK)
(Out of the Loop, PO Box 222, Tuart Hill W.A., 6939 AUSTRALIA, www.outoftheloop.com.au)

SKIP JENSEN & HIS SHAKIN' FEET - "On the Right Side" EP

Aaah. Another great one man band. I know I'm biased but almost all one man bands rule. Side A rocks out with two fast, garagey numbers. Start shakin' your ass along with Skip's feet. "Promised Land" is a slow, bluesy ballad.You'd think it was at least two or three people rockin this hard. (CK)
(Yakisakana, 51, rue Renaudel, 76 100 Rouen, FRANCE, yakisakana.rec@wanadoo.fr)

JOY DIVISION - "Warsaw" LP

Not being able to top Andy Darling's perceptive and thoughtful review of this LP last month (when it was rightfully released under the band's then-working-name, WARSAW), I'll just say that there's Something About Ian; the band's *Ideal for Living* 12" was, is, and will remain one of punk rock's early and undisputed classics; and if you're flirting with fame and consider suicide, *don't*, because you never know what kind of ugly berk will play you in the TV movie based on your rise and fall. *Warsaw* is a collection of JOY DIVISION's early-read-punk demos, most of which have been comped before in nicer packages with better sound—always a thrill to hear "Failures", "No Love Lost", "The Leaders of Men" and "She's Lost Control" no matter what the format. If you gotta hear this material (and you really should), check out the recent WARSAW *Ideal for Killing* LP which includes their first 12" along with the basement-chainsaw demos. (JH)
(Retropop)

JUNK SCHIZO - "Pity to the Ignorant" EP

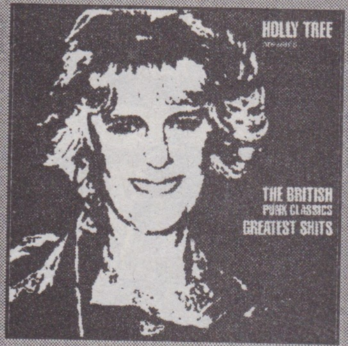
A Japanese hardcore group that brings to mind mid-80s UK hardcore with their flanger-effected guitar and plodding doom-ridden bass lines mixed with the typical over-the-top Japanese approach to hardcore. The singer, who I think might be a native English speaker—judging by the written lyrics and the fact that his name is listed as being "John"—sounds like the second singer of ANTISECT. The first song on side two has a CONFUSE distortion overload sound but still retains the UKHC sound in the vocals. Interesting. I like. The last song is a weird plodding number that has lyrics that need to be read to be believed—they're just plain weird. Overall, I'm intrigued by this band and am interested in hearing more from them. (WM)
(Doom, 3-16-17 Nakakagaya Suminoe-Ku, Osaka, JAPAN)

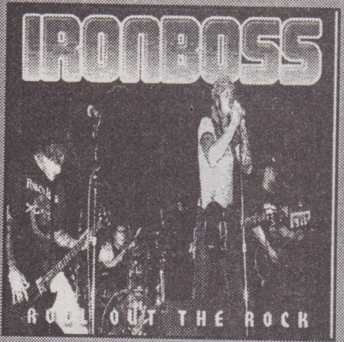
KK 44 - " Un Hospice Pour Crever" EP

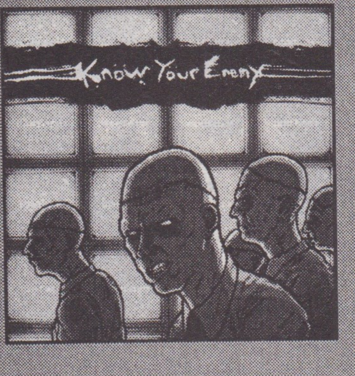
Alright street punk anthemic-core punk. A bit slower and plodding than most of this stuff is. The vocals are real neat—they sound like a German guy who somehow used to be in ODFX, learned French, and joined up with the UNSEEN on heroin. Good music to beat up Rude Boys by. (JA)
(Bords De Seine, BP 85, 75561 Paris CX 12, FRANCE)

KENT BROCKMAN/EDORA - split LP

It takes a lot of fucking balls to name yourself after a *Simpsons* character...KENT BROCKMAN pulls it off a lot better than I expected. Without being another power-violence cliche, they pull from the sporadic songwrit-







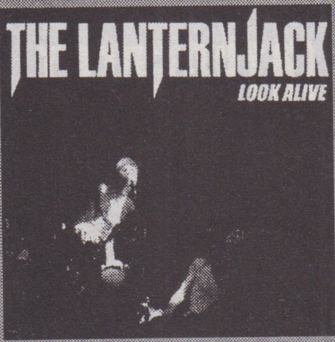
ing, vocal style, and silly attitude of SPAZZ, mixing it with fast, energetic, straightforward thrash. EDORA unleashes an assault of fuzzed-out guitars, furious blastbeat, and harsh female vocals similar to SCROTUM GRINDER. 12 songs of unrelenting hardcore mayhem. A great record. Orange vinyl too! (VH)
(TVG, Axel Brandt, PF 1219, 14963 Ludwigsfelde, GERMANY, www.t-v-g-a-x.de)

KNOW YOUR ENEMY - "State My Regrets" CD
This is a really good straight edge record from the Netherlands. In looking at the group shot in the insert, every kid in this band is wearing a crucial t-shirt of an American straight edge band (with the exception of the dude wearing the Champion shirt). So it is no surprise that this comes off sounding like a modern straight edge band from America (given their influences). Take a little of the early AMERICAN NIGHTMARE stuff, and combine it with some RIGHT BRIGADE, and you get KNOW YOUR ENEMY. Artwork by the very prolific hardcore artist, Michael Bukowski. (CC)
(Crucial Response, Kaisersfield 98, 46047 Oberhausen, GERMANY)

THE KOWALSKIS/THE LULABELLES - split EP
I am an absolute sucker for chicks singing punk rock. Tell the world. I hear it and it sets into motion a chemical reaction in my body. That's the only explanation I can come up with. This record has triggered that reaction. Thr KOWALSKIS sound like they've been locked up in room for the last fifteen years with only food and GO-GO'S records. The result, as might be expected, is pretty damn good, if not entirely original. The LULABELLES were locked in the room next door. However, whoever locked them in took away the GO-GO'S records and substituted records from the FLATMATES and CHIN CHIN. Again, the results are pretty damn good. I will be looking for this one. (KK)
(Thunderbaby, Hasselsstr. 120, 40599 Düsseldorf, GERMANY, www.thunderbaby.de)

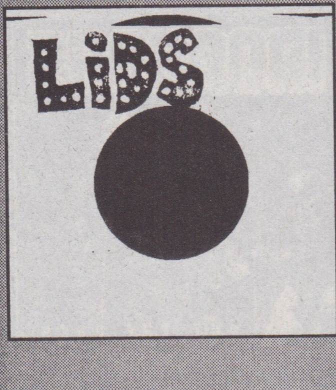
KRAWALL BRUDER – "Die Fauste Hock" CD
Tough oi/skinhead music from Germany. Basic riffs, catchy tunes and deep vocals make this fairly typical German street punk, that is to say— fairly drunken German street punk. It's not terrible, just not very original. They do look pretty tough though, I wouldn't fancy my chances against that big fella. (AD)
(KB)

KUMPELBASIS – "Machte des Alltags" CD
Tuneful Kraut punk, sang in German. This is not bad—It's slightly more original than most of the drek out there masquerading as "real punk," it even has horns and a reggae song. I've no idea of what they're singing about but they look like nice enough guys. (AD)
(Intensive Scare, Lilienthastr.4, 10965 Berlin, GERMANY)



KUNG FU RICK - "Coming to an End" LP
KUNG FU RICK are finally bringing the band to close, but not before body slamming this stellar release on our awaiting ears. You get a little of it all here. They incorporate slower-paced dark metallic grind, straight-up hardcore and blast beat insanity together and create one hell of a release. They have at least two full-time vocalists spitting out their tonsils at you, but according to the insert lots of folks pitched in for vocal help on this release. As I mentioned in my column in this issue, they came out here and slayed everybody at the Super Sabado fest. And now they have got this excellent release to back-up that tremendous performance. Way to go out on a high note...fucking aces to the kids! (RC)
(625, PO Box 423413, San Francisco, CA 94142-3413, www.625thrash.com)

THE LANTERNJACK - "Look Alive" CD
THE LANTERNJACK hail from the Motor City and and have that Detroit-via-Sweden sound similar to the HELLACOPTERS. My only complaints are the boringness of the packaging and the tempo is just a little slow to keep my interest. Faster = better. (DP)
(Lowdown, PO Box 4502, Ann Arbor, MI 48106, www.lowdownrecordings.com)



THELASTDAYNOHUMANVOICE - "D640 4-50 55 DE4 87-9 2223" CD
I really don't think I could listen to this record again if my life depended on it. This makes MERZBOW sound like Mozart, N.O.Y.F.B. like Chopin. It's not noise-grind per se—they're going for some tech-y NAKED CITY type approach, but failing miserably, as Steve Austin's horrendous all-treble production has rendered this just an unlistenably noisy racket of tuneless uninteresting garbage. Not to attribute the blame to the wrong party—no production on earth could save these non-songs from sucking. (EL)
(HG Fact, 105 Nakano Shinbashi-M, 2-7-15 Yayoi-Cho, Nakano Ku, Tokyo, 164-0013, JAPAN)

LIBERATE - "Never Fading Away" EP
This is great hard-charging, fist-pumping punk rock from Japan. Harsh vocals spit and growl over these mid-paced but heavy rocking tunes. And it all comes together creating another fine release of Japanese punk rock. (RC)
(Blood Sucker, #203 1-16-18 Kusunoki-cho Nishi-ku, Hiroshima, JAPAN)

LICKGOLDENSKY - "The Beautiful Sounds of..." CD
I was all set to bag on these guys, as the chaotic metalcore style they traffic in is definitely getting old these days, but from the second I actually put it in my player, I was pleasantly surprised at how much this band rocked me. They're not trying to be the fastest, heaviest, or craziest band in the world, and instead turn in just a killer set of tunes. Great, clear production, without being too polished—the guitars in particular sound especially full and heavy. Everything here just sounds a bit more energetic, frantic and, well, earnest than most of the COALESCE/BOTCH clones I've heard lately. Good stuff. (EL)
(Escape Artist, PO Box 472, Downington, PA 19335-0472, www.escapeartistrecords.com)

LIDS - "No Fool for You" EP
Bouncy simple 1,2,3,4 punk rock with alternating female/male vocals that will get you dancing whether you have had one beer or forty. I would call this garage pop punk, otherwise known as that "what we lack in musicianship we will make up with enthusiasm". That my friends is a good thing, as is this EP. (JF)
(Die Slaughter, ilovethelids@yahoo.com)

THE LOADS - "Beach Banshee" EP

I can almost guarantee you that this is a winner, and I'm going to tell you why. The pic sleeve looks like it could have come from 1978. They thank the STITCHES and the NUMBERS. They mix uppercase and lowercase fonts randomly. Now, if you want to make a good record, there's your recipe. Not only does it look like it could have come from '78, it sounds like it, too. In fact it sounds like these could have been lost tracks from the *Beach Boulevard* compilation, one of the best compilations of SoCal surf/beach/hardcore ever. Some people say that sounding retro is boring and lacks originality, and if you're just copying the sound, then I agree. But these same records often have an energy that makes them compelling. This is raw, energetic, fast, and desperate. Yeah, I like it. (KK)

(Pelado, 521 W. Wilson #C103, Costa Mesa, CA, 92627, www.peladorecords.com)

LOURDS 5 - "Touche Pas a Mon Bock" EP

Next to baguettes, brie cheese and wine it seems that plodding Oi is high up on the list of French exports. Slow pedestrian, uninspiring Oi with the most ridiculous guttural vocals make this record an absolute stinker, I struggled to make it through all three songs...sorry guys. (TB)

(GALB, B.P 80073-60181, Nogent/Oise Cedex, FRANCE)

LOVED & HATED – "Hardcore Punk's Not Dead" CD

Hard, tough, and straight outta New York (or thereabouts) LOVED & HATED let you have it with both barrels. Fans of early AGNOSTIC FRONT (members of whom sing backing vocals), POISON IDEA, and basically all yer heavy aggressive hardcore take note. Bands like this always leave me wondering if I could beat each of them in a fight, I think that's what you're supposed to do, don't you think? I reckon I could give it a pretty good go, though the bass player's called Frankie Fingers and you gotta watch out for guys with names like that, kids. Em…mosh! (AD)

(GMM, PO Box 15234, Atlanta, GA 3033)

MC5 - "Babes in Arms" LP

This puts probably 90% of the other records reviewed in this issue to shame. It's as simple as that. This is a reissue of a 1983 ROIR cassette release that collected rare versions and alternate takes of MC5 recordings from 1966-1971. Included is a version of "Skunk (Sonically Speaking)" that is just pulverizing, until about two-thirds of the way through, when a horn section kicks in out of nowhere and the song dissolves into a Coltrane/Sun Ra freakout and you realize that you are listening to genius. If you count yourself among the uninitiated, you owe it to yourself to go record shopping today, and this would be as good a start as any. (AM)

(ROIR, 611 Broadway Ste. 411, New York, NY 10012)

MACHINE GUN PETE & THE AMMUNITION - "The Rawness of Truth" EP

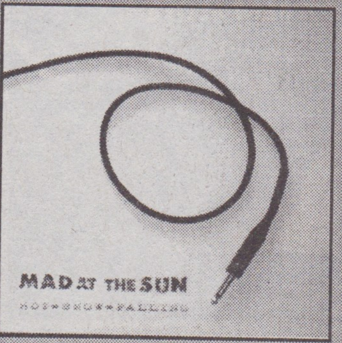
Raw is definitely a word you could use to describe this record. It's loose, sloppy, energetic garage punk with depraved-sounding vocals. (Note: it's not Garage™ like all the music press are creaming themselves over right now, it just sounds like they're playing in a garage, and is therefore much better.) This record has a lot going for it. The last song, "Carpenter's Blood", is a classic. I wish they'd splashed out on a decent sleeve instead of this handwritten/poorly photocopied effort, but I suppose it adds to the "instant art" feel of the release. (AM)

(Dylaramma, no address)

MAD AT THE SUN - "Hot Snow Falling" CD

This band could give me that tingly feeling like FUGAZI, but I feel as though there's too much salt in the skillet. (MM)

(Boss Tuneage, PO Box 74, Sandy, Bedfordshite, SG19 2WB, UK)



MESS - "The Ship of Death" LP

Super rock and roll-influenced Japanese stuff here from MESS, bordering at times on cock rock. I realize that this is the way a lot of Japanese bands have gone in the last few years, but I cannot say that I am a fan. Early 90s SubPop fans take note. (WN)

(Blood Sucker, #203 1-16-18 Kusunoki-cho Nishi-ku, Hiroshima, JAPAN)

MIND FLAYER - "Take Your Skin Off" CD

Ah, Bulb Records. This is like being asked to review the COFFEE LP on Blackjack, as far as critical moments goes. A local someone who's a shamelessly transparent scene whore liked this band in print recently, so I was prepared to savage them in cosmic revenge, but let's not do that. Especially to a record this good. Muttering, squealing confusion, fuzz and metallic strainings, non-"metal" metal, this disc has it all. Vocals sound like the singer is constantly interrupting himself. For those of you who would love to like something "weird" this week, pay some cosmic dues and buy this damn record. If we make them popular enough, they can become unpopular! That's what I'm here for! (RW)

(Bulb, 4609 Hunt Rd, Adrian, MI 49221)

MINOR THREAT - "Sometimes Good Guys Don't Wear White" LP

A horrible bootleg from Finland. Barely audible vocals and muddled everything else makes this sound like it was recorded on a boom box. MINOR THREAT is one of my favorite bands ever, and I still think that the person who put this out should mow my lawn and pay *me* a dollar to own this record. And who puts their address on a bootleg anyway? Avoid at all costs. (CC)

(HC Live Classics, PO Box 2020, SF-00500 Helsinki, FINLAND)

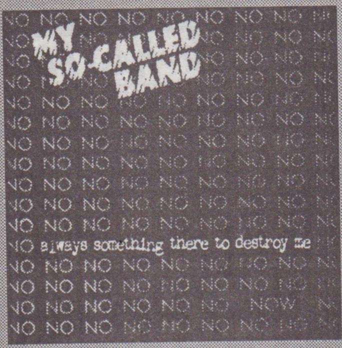
MODEY LEMON - "Enemy" 2xEP

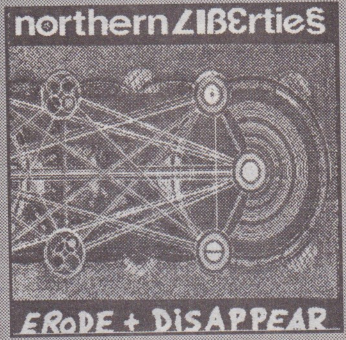
Goofy, art-damaged, kind of new wavey blues rock two-man band, featuring "lead drums" and a hard-riffing guitarist who sings and throws in a little moog. Interesting, although none of the five songs really grab me. (DD)

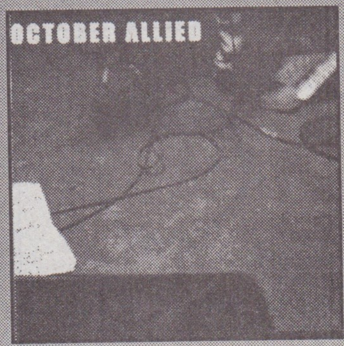
(In the Red, 1118 W. Magnolia Blvd, PO Box #208, Burbank, CA 91506)

THE MONSTERS - "I See Dead People" CD

The return of LIGHTING BEAT-MAN's wonderful garage punk band the MONSTERS. I heard about this coming out a few months ago and have been looking for it ever since. Finally it shows up. It is an amazing record, even with the unfortunate title. They take the best aspects of the MUMMIES legendary performances and work







them into their sound, letting it all loose on all their recordings. Fourteen perfect songs ranging from bratty love songs to cool instrumentals. As a bonus if you have one of these fancy new CD players like *MRR* does, it displays the titles of each track as it starts to play. It fun to see "Fuck My Brain" come up on the display. (CK)
(Voodoo Rhythm, info@voodoorhythm.com)

MOTUS - "Razlike" CD
More melodic hardcore from Eastern Europe—this time think a heavy *Suffer* era BAD RELIGION meets early YOUTH BRIGADE influence. Definitely worth tracking down this 13-song CD. (MT)
(Hogar, 11 Novoselski Odvojak 5, 10040 Zagreb, CROATIA, zghchogar@hotmail.com)

MY SO CALLED BAND- "Always Something There to Destroy Me" CD
Rock 'n' roll punk from the South. Sneering vocals and smart lyrics combined with wailing guitars and fast beats make this an entertaining listen. When you listen to some of these bands from so-called smaller scenes, who put a lot of heart into what they put out, you can kind of look inside their world, such is the case with MY SO CALLED BAND. I'm here in San Francisco cooking listening to a band that people in and around Charlotte, North Carolina (and probably very few in between) are most likely very familiar with. That's cool. (AD)
(Suicide Watch, PO Box 9599, Charlotte, NC 28299)

N.C.C. - "To Hell and Back" 10"
This is some solid eighties punk rock that whips my head to and fro. These seven tunes make me crank up the volume and whip out my air guitar. One tune is like LOS OLVIDADOS, another like the LAZY COWGIRLS, and yet another like DOA! Excellent disc! (HM)
(Punch, Apdo. Correos 60167, 28080 Madrid, SPAIN, punch@ctv.es)

NAILBITER/DESTRUCCION - split LP
Bear with me on this...NAILBITER are from the UK featuring folks from (I believe) Portugal and South America playing Japanese style hardcore...still with me? Wailing guitar leads, deep guttural vocals and mangled English (and Portugese) lyrics backed by ripping hardcore make for killer goods. DESTRUCCION from Spain win the "punkest record cover of the year" award with a badly sketched drawing of a hand with studded wristband flipping the bird flanked by two anarchy signs...punk! Musically these folks take their sound from the old raw Scandinavian hardcore bands like BASTARDS and KAAOS (though much more one dimensional), their side would have fared better as an EP but still worth checking out for sure. (TB)
(La Vida Es Un Mus, BM Active, WCIN 3XX, London, UK)

NECROS - "Maumee + City + Madhouse" 2xLP
Well, if you want a quick music lesson on NECROS look no further. All the studio recordings, a live show from 1982 and three unreleased tracks from the *Sex Drive Demo* (granted two of them are SHAM 69 covers) on a no frills bootleg. The sound quality is decent even on the live recording and the unreleased "Work Now" is a good song. (CK)
(no address)

NIGHTMARE - "Footprints of the Wind" EP
Rough-edged Japanese hardcore with a touch of rock 'n' roll to their sound, much in the vein of JABARA, FORWARD, PAINTBOX, and JUDGEMENT. What sets these guys apart from the rest of their raging distortion contemporaries is the damaged action saxophone player—who Mike Thorn tells me is already out of the band (as is the piano player [!]). This is some seriously charged hardcore. This record was released in 1999 so I don't know if you can find this or not but you can try via... (WM)
(Bloodsucker, c/o Yousuke Yamauchi, 223 1-17-3 Nishiawaji Higashiyodogawa-ku, Osaka, JAPAN 533-0031)

NORTHERN LIBERTIES - "Erode and Disappear" CD
This has an indescribable old quality to it. HICKEY comes to mind at certain points, given the diversity of the arrangements and the surreal bent of the lyrics, but it's nowhere near that brilliant. I can hear some BUZZCOCKS, which I always enjoy, but for the most part this band refuses to define itself. I've always seen that as a good thing, but if you scare easy and don't want your precious punk bands to play anything but GORILLA BISCUITS covers, avoid this. Still, I'm kind of partial to it. (MX)
(World Eater, www.worldeaterrecords.com)

OCTOBER ALLIED - CD
What a load of crap. Dear Jesus nailed to a cross, put this band out their misery. Throaty vocals, rockabilly licks, yet no sign of anything redeeming on this CD. It's kinda political and really really boring. Guys, trying to be political and country doesn't work (well I guess it does...but just not for you). Fucking stop it. Stop it now. (BM)
(Phony)

ODDBALLS' BAND - "Shit Explosion '94-'99" CD
I don't know the first thing about the self-proclaimed ODDBALLS' BAND (can you fault me for that?), except that they existed for at least five years in the late 20th century and hailed from Germany. On to the career-spanning retrospective! Poor move to place the worst gawdawful shit bluegrass tune in the first slot: you're gonna alienate your potential listeners. I'm thinking they wanted to sound like the German HEADCOATS: the tell-tale signs have fallen into place. Choppy punk R&B riffs, "mean" sounding tune. Lyrics about shit-taking instead of shit-talking. Music's okay, the words aren't, and the vocals are so-so. ARMITAGE SHANKS this ain't. (JH)
(Weird Science, Vergebirgstr. 78, 53119 Bonn, GERMANY, www.weird-science-records.de)

OHLO SECO - "Os Primeros Dias 1981-1983" CD
The first of two great Brasilian reissues this month. OHLO SECO are fucking hardcore legends down south, and these songs culled from demos and studio outtakes show exactly why. Blistering stuff, but there are unfortunately no liner notes to speak of, so I guess the music will speak for itself. There's no address here (sorry) but keep your eyes peeled, this one is well worth your wages. (WN)
(Gravacoes Sem Qualidade)

OLHO SECO - "Fome Nuclear" CD
This official release documents the fury of OLHO SECO with 24 tracks of insane chaotic brutality from '85-'89. It's relentless Brazilian hardcore played at breakneck speeds, full of insane wall of noise guitar work. In a lot of ways, I find this era of OLHO SECO to be much more raw and intense than their earlier recordings. A great period of a great band. (VH)
(no address)

OMA HANS - 12"

More melodic German punk for you to enjoy; not quite as powerful as DACKELBLUT's attack, but highly enjoyable nonetheless. Once again the later period HÜSKER DÜ comparison comes to mind. Solid. (MT)
(Schiffen, Reeperbahn 63, 20359 Hamburg, GERMANY, www.schiffen.de)

ONE STEP SHIFT - "Chemical Burn" EP

What we have here is an interesting combination of quirky musicianship and loud, hectic "screamo" stuff...The B side is this quiet number that has me thinking of a very sub-par MOSS ICON. Interesting record. (SP)
(Loderbrock, www.loderbrock.com)

OUTFACE - "[P]Révolution" CD

Early-90s hardcore outta France. Nothing too innovative—a sometimes catchy, but generic, mix of FUGAZI guitar work, JAWBREAKER breakdowns (complete with recorded samples of the talking in the background—you know what I mean), and AVAIL type choruses. It's fast, melodic, well-produced, has well-intentioned progressive political lyrics (in English & French), crunchy guitars, and a sound that just doesn't keep my attention anymore. I'm sure some people love this, but I'm bored. (AS).
(Stereo Session, no address, outface@viola.fr)

OUT OF TOUCH - "Grass Roots" EP

OUT OF TOUCH from Japan burst through the gates with a whirlwind of full-throttle thrash. Occasionally they slow things down and the music has a quirky emoish/poppy feel to it. Unfortunately the singer's vocals where quite abrasive and screechy and I found them hard stomach at times. Overall the music on this was pretty good, but those vocals.....ouch! (RC)
(Blurred, 482-1 Naka Kambra Ihara Shizuoka, 421-3213 JAPAN; blurred.tv)

PEST - "Rock City Baby" EP

Big guitar rock riffs is what this band is all about—mostly mid-paced and with a groove sorta like NINE SHOCKS TERROR, but without any of their power. (MT)
(Bloodsucker, c/o Yousuke Yamauchi, 223 1-17-3 Nishiawaji Higashiyodogawa-ku, Osaka, JAPAN 533-0031)

LES POCHES -"A.L.F." 45

French oi played halfway inspired, with the guitars too far out in front. The artwork has a lot of pictures of people acting dumb and drinking, so I am going to assume that the songs have something to do with drinking (it also helps that the one song in English is about that subject matter). Since I don't read or speak French, I am going to say that the lyrics to the remaining songs talk about French pride and how they refuse to let the USA tell them to kill innocents in Iraq. Sometimes fantasy is better than reality. (JF)
(Bords De Seine, BP85, 75561 Paris Ck 12, FRANCE)

POP THREAT - "Scum" CD

A UK band with a gal singer here. Good post punk that reminds me of mid-era SIOUXSIE & THE BANSHEES and JOY DIVISION. The gal vocals with its fuzzpop tone give this a softer quality at times. A strong full length that may take a second listen to really sink in. (RL)
(Mook, PO Box 155, Leeks, LS7 2XN, UK, popthreat@hotmail.com)

THE PORTERS – "A Tribute to Arthur Guinness" CD

German skinheads sing Irish drinking songs, unfortunately the German accent does not lend itself well to Irish music and this sounds pretty bad. Their choice of songs is pretty good though, aside from that I would avoid this, unless you're really, really into the whole Irish thing. (AD)
(Knock Out)

POTOMAC - LP

I reviewed a double EP by these guys a few months back and liked it a lot. POTOMAC seem to have labored quite intensely on this one. Its technical as hell, quite heavier and more intricate than the last record, and the production is completely flawless. Nothing totally groundbreaking in terms of style—emo-hardcore ala MEREL or ICONOCLAST—but a good listen either way and a quality slab of vinyl. (SP)
(Hombre Lobo, Postfach 10 31 17, 60101 Frankfurt / Main, GERMANY, Hombre-Lobo@gmx.de)

PUNCHLINE - "Rewind" CD

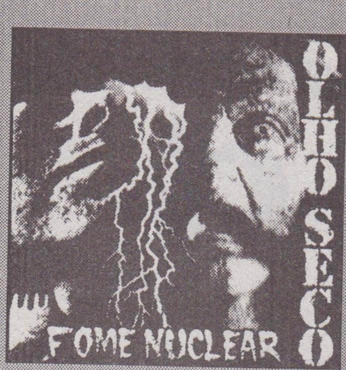
If this band ditched the slick production tricks (e.g. note-perfect harmonies, vocal effects, etc.) they might be half as good as the INSURGENT. They have their moments of balls-out genius when the distorted vocals kick in; that hint at the band they could be if they cut their songs in half (4 songs in 25 minutes? Fuck off! I say) and focused less on production and more on intensity. Sometimes you just have to scream "1-2-3-4!" and see what happens. Catch them out on tour with the USED and NEW FOUND GLORY (OK, I made that up, but how far away can such a bill be?) (MX)
(Fueled by Ramen, PO Box 12563, Gainesville, FL 32604, www.fueledbyramen.com)

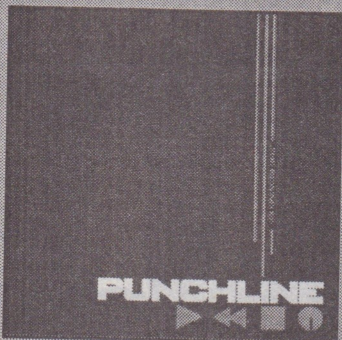
RANCID VAT - "The Cheesesteak Years" CD

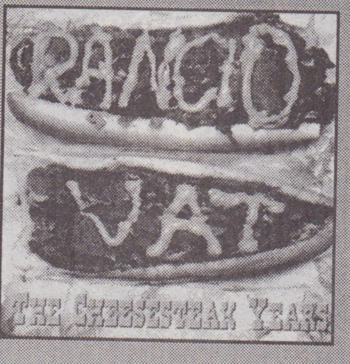
Now this is some solid, hateful, obnoxious, in-your-face, rock-punk, punk rock. This is material from the last quarter of their 20-plus year existence, and features songs from a couple of their releases and many more solid rejects. Features their classics: "Jobjumper", "Hostile City USA," "Bruiser Brody," and "Blobs Have More Fun." Good dirty fun. (HM)
(Steel Cage, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125, www.steelcagerecords.com, http://home.conectiv.net/~whskyreb/)

REAGAN NATIONAL CRASH DIET- "Sucktastic!" 2xEP

In a very "whoaaoo ohh ohh ohh ohh ohh," "this song is about a girl" type of way, this band is reminiscent of the pop punk side characteristics of Lookout Records sounding bands. Think SCREECHING WEASEL, but without the edge, like ginger snaps without the ginger or snap. (MM)
(Rooster Cow, PO Box 578174, Chicago, IL 60657, www.roostercow.com)





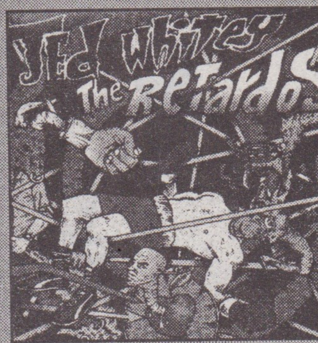


THE REAL MCKENZIES - "Pissed Tae Th' Gills: a Drunken Live Tribute to Robbie Burns" LP

If you've heard any of these guys' records, this is basically the same songs (and the same joke) played live on Burns Night 2000. Depending on your point of view or level of inebriation, this is either a joyous celebration of all things Scottish, or a pathetic parody and the worst example of brigadoonery. What the HANSON BROTHERS are to Hockey, the REAL MCKENZIES are to Scotland. The Canadian reference is no coincidence either. Having said that, they are an amazing live experience and this record does manage to capture some of that magic. Not essential, but at the same time, if you only ever get one of their records, this is probably a decent one to get. (AM)
(Social Bomb, Heckenstr. 35/HH, 47058 Duisburg, GERMANY, www.plastic-bomb.de)

REGRET - "Do You Remember Hardcore?" LP

"Bring Me the Head of Tony Victory"? Wasn't that a CHARLES BRONSON song? Talking shit on Victory Records was *so* seven years ago. Do kids even still listen to Victory Records? Haha. Anyway, REGRET bring you twelve songs of fast hardcore with gruff vocals and an overall sense of humor. The lyrics are in English, but the other insert explaining the bands ideas is completely in German with a disclamer that reads "Everything written in German here, because I know that for example you AmeriKKKan fucks are very open minded towards other cultures and in this way you are also interested in learning foreign languages." Damn, and I really wanted to read what he had to say...(CC)
(Crapchord, c/o Hansi Haug, Grabenstr.15, 73262 Reichenbach/Fils, GERMANY)



RELIGIOUS WAR - "Cracked System" 12"

Charging bull drums, pissed-as-fuck vocals (think NEGATIVE APPROACH), buzzsaw guitars—it's nearly flawless in its execution of raw distort-o-rama hardcore. Bits of GASTUNK filtered through LIP CREAM comes to mind, though they could pick up the pace a bit. Side A is a total scorcher. (MT)
(Hardcore Holocaust, PO Box 26742, Richmond, VA 23261)

RETARDOS/JED WHITEY - split EP

Two bands, two continents, and four songs. Norway's RETARDOS deliver two truly Scandinavian rock 'n' roll delights—"Crank it Up" and "Stop Running Around." Both songs are a catchy and melodic blend of KISS, TURBONEGRO, and the HELLACOPTERS—would you expect them to sound different? Don't be ridiculous. We all know 90% of garage rock bands from Scandinavia sound like this. On the flipside, Australia's JED WHITEY continues the action party with "One Trick Pony," a song that sounds so much like the DICTATORS' "Two Tub Man" (I love the DICTATORS..."who I want to screw I screw") that it might as well be a cover. Oh well. But hold on, don't go home yet, cuz their next song *is* a cover! "Cold Comfort," by POISON IDEA, another one of my favorite bands. This record is a keeper. In the words of PEE-WEE HERMAN, "thanks a lot dudes." (AS)
(Out of the Loop, PO Box 222, Tuart Hill, W.A. 6939, AUSTRALIA. www.outofloop.com.au)

ROIDS - "We Were..." CD

All I can say is thank fuck that its "were" in the title and not "are" as I'd hate to think this band were still peddling this tripe to unsuspecting folk. This band were around Florida in the late 80s playing throwaway thrashy punk—not unlike a sped up ANTiSEEN (stupid shithead lyrics like that band too). Its all pretty amatuerish and a total waste of time. Unless you were one of the handful of "fans" this band might have had back in the day I'd steer clear. (TB)
(Calemme Carlo, c/o Scarey, CP 516, 10121 Torino Succ. 76, ITALY)

RUINERS - "How's That Grab Ya?" CD

Horror-movie ooga-booga from an undressed porno novelty...all blood, guts and heavily-applied eyeliner. *When in Rome Do As the Vandals* with female backing vocals and surf leads: that's how it grabs me. (JH)
(Disaster, PO Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510, www.disasterrecords.com)

RYTMIHÄIRIÖ - "Surman Vuodet: the Homicide Years" CD

Über-raw, distorted late 80s Finnish hardcore with a metallic edge and some of the rawest vocals this side of the singer of BLOOD SPIT NIGHTS. This is a discography, of sorts, of these raw thrash maniacs comprising their two EPs and their one LP, plus some unreleased tracks from their first 7" recording session. All that seems to be missing is their split LP tracks with AMEN from '92. Seriously, this is some way-fuckin'-over-the-top raw hardcore, so intense that even I have a headache after listening to this. A total of 37 songs in 68m19s. Pure audio violence!! Recommended. (WM)
(Mörri, Pekantie 26, FIN – 58500, Punkaharju, FINLAND, oitkonen@cc.joensuu.fi)

SAVIORS - "Ruby Gloom/Recipe for Disaster"

First off, what the fuck are you cats saving? Your ass cherries? Anyway, the A-side offers a decent power pop-ish tune with just a little butt rock wank and almost had me batting for their team, but then the B-side's tough guy wank wank wank leaves me bored and unimpressed. I can't say I'm in love with this band, but I can't say they are a whole lot of suck either. What else do you want me to say? (BM)
(Rapid Pulse, www.rapidpulserecords.com)

SAWTOOTH GRIN - "Cuddle Monster" CD

The SAWTOOTH GRIN play modern art-punk in the vein of LIGHTNING BOLT, CROM-TECH, and ARAB ON RADAR without completely giving up their ugly hardcore roots. Their music is complex, aggressive, and unbelievably fast. Unlike a lot of their peers, they don't take it to the point of giving listeners bad headaches that make them feel like they're listening to the soundtrack from that calculus class they failed in college. While it is completely chaotic and insane, it is at times very listenable. They didn't forget about the beauty of the breakdown. This is fucking great. (VH)
(TheSawtoothGrin@yahoo.com)

SCROTUM - "Testiburnes Et Prostitruies" CD

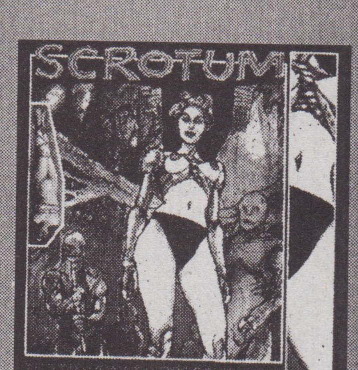
A French punk band, that sound decidedly, er, French. Not only do they sing in their native tongue, but they haven't learned that to be successfully pigeonholed, you have to stick to one style. Rather, they seemed to have gleefully plundered the broad church that was punk in the late 70s, and come up with some straightforward '77 punkers, some keyboard infused ska, some early POLICE new wavers, and several in between. And it works. Vive le rock. (RK)
(Sea, Sex & Cocaine, 80 Avenue G Pompidou, 06220 Golfe Juan, FRANCE)

SEDITION - "End in the Beginning, Beginning in the End" CD

Classic early 90s UK peace punk stuff that I always put in the same camp as US bands like INITIAL STATE and ANTISCHISM. Snarling vocals paired with ripping thrashy hardcore provides a backdrop to their pagan-punk attack. Intense and well thought-out lyrics promoting a neo-primitivist anarcho attack on consumerist society. This disc contains everything except the split with DISAFFECT. Killer stuff. (MT)
(Flat Earth, 145-149 Cardigan Rd, Leeds, LS6 1LJ, UK, www.flatearth.free-online.co.uk)

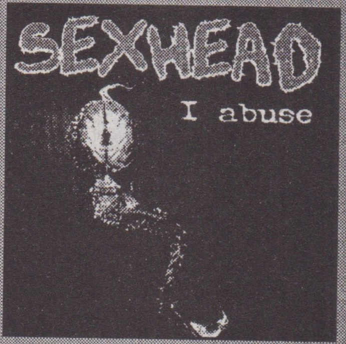
SEXHEAD - "I Abuse" CD

SEXHEAD are from Montréal and are a cross between the NOBODYS and SLOPPY SECONDS with their sloppy pop and obsession with girls and sex. This music is very dorky, but also very fun. (DP)
(www.sexheadmusic.com)



SHANK - "The Curse of..." CD

Scotland's SHANK present to you everything they've ever recorded pre their juggernaut of a LP on 625. Brutal, paint-peeling, 300 mph hardcore that reminded me a bit of Chicago's MK-ULTRA on speed. I must say, SHANK has some of the best most well thought out lyrics of any band going these days (despite looking like a bunch of soccer hooligans!), reaching far beyond the realm of "war=bad, cops=suck." Highly recommended. (MT)
(Out of Limits, PO Box 526, Springvale, ME 04083)

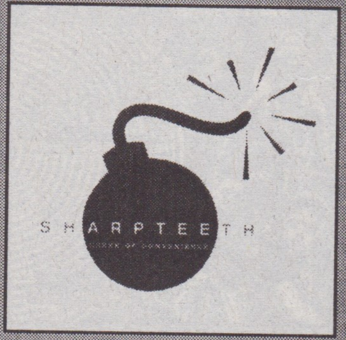


SHARP TEETH - "Curse of Convenience" CD

Recorded by Jesse Gander of D.B.S. and OPERATION MAKEOUT fame, SHARP TEETH take the RITES OF SPRING model and incorporate modern hardcore influences (usually on the screamier side) to come up with a fresh sound while retaining a few healthy scraps of nostalgia. The singer sounds exactly like Guy Picciotto, and holds it down with passion and sincerity. I look forward to the possibility of seeing them live. DIY enthusiasts take note: if you desire a more epic CD insert for a little less money, do what SHARP TEETH does and include a photocopied fold out poster inside the little four panel booklet. Who woulda thunk it? (MX)

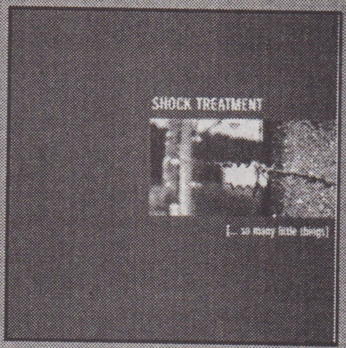
SHIKARI - "Dead Men" EP

This is heavy as all hell. Completely crushing hardcore from the Netherlands on this little slab of vinyl courtesy of Level Plane. Nothing too surprising in terms of style—makes me think of URANUS or DRIFT quite a bit—but man do they do this sound justice! The bass is fully distorted which I think gives SHIKARI an interesting twist and adds to their overall heaviness. This will surely blow your eardrums if you play at too high a volume. (SP)
(Level Plane, PO Box 4329, Philadelphia, PA 19118,www.level-plane.com)



SHOCK TREATMENT/BOOTER - split EP

Wow, a good combination on this split. Italy's SHOCK TREATMENT play driving jazzcore with trebley guitars. Imagine if the MINUTEMEN had longer songs. On the flip and coming to us from France, BOOTER's first song has a melodic bass line and ringing guitars, reminding me of later IGNITION. Their second song is heavier and less appealing, but on the whole this record is highly recommended. (AM)
(Peste & Cholera, c/o Xavier Barbarit, 23 Rue Des Lices, 49100 Angers, FRANCE, peste.cholera@wanadoo.fr)



SHOE! - "Don't Shoot Your Firearms in Celebration" CD

Good emo pop punk from the UK. Similar in sound to J CHURCH and TRAVIS CUT. This has some good guitar work and some good tempo changes. The vocals tend to be a little monotone and screaming at times, but I guess that's why they call it emotional. A good start for a band that has the potential to be great. (RL)
(All Gone Wrong c/o The Cavern, 83-84 Queen St., Exeter EX43RP, UK, www.shoe-online.co.uk)

SHOTWELL - "The Devil Has its Day" CD

San Francisco's SHOTWELL presents to you ten tracks of honest, angry, yet hopeful punk that's as tuneful as it is raw and gritty. Desperate and bitter yet full of life and hope. They are the perfect soundtrack to wandering the neighborhood known as the Mission, from which they are spawned. Great as always. (MT)
($5 ppd: Plan-it-X, 5810 W. Willis Rd, Georgetown, IN 47122-9117)

SIDECAR – "You're Killing Me" CD

What? Full paged pictures of each band member looking all cool-and-edgy and yet not threatening-enough-to-frighten-your-teenage-daughter-and-therefore-lose-the-chance-of-getting-her-baby-sitting money by getting her to buy this piece of crap because the poor misguided girl thinks it's punk and all the cool kids at school are punk and look like these poseurs called SIDECAR. This pretty much sums up what is bad about a lot of American punk these days, it's unthreatening, disposable, radio-friendly, and thoroughly soulless. It's bland, it's not even catchy, I don't like this. These guys are going to be big. (AD)
(Three Mileage)

SIDEKICK - "Amistad" 10"

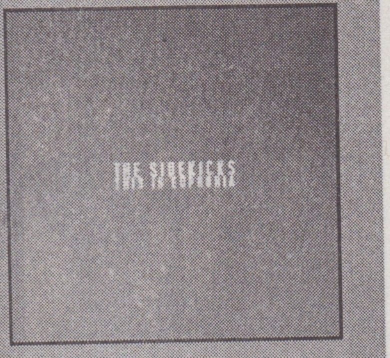
Tough guy hardcore from Germany. "Here we are back with a mission/SIDEKICK is back to show all fakes the vision/We talk about a united scene/You stupid motherfucker can't destroy that dream/People like to talk behind our backs/Speak face to face and I'll break your fuckin neck/We represent on every fuckin show/Hardcore lives through our SFC Crew" (from "All for One"). So I guess you get the idea, yes? Mid-tempo hardcore with loads of MADBALL worship, except that MADBALL at least plays fast. For the kids who wanted to play football, but weren't quite good enough—sorry, that was mean. (WN)
(Jogges Krist, Karl-Schurz-Str. 23, 70190, Stuttgart-Ost, GERMANY)

SIDEKICKS - "This Is Euphoria" CD

This trio manage to take the rather tired punk/pop, indie-rock formula and kick it around enough to make it sound almost fresh, and a little different. At their best, they inject enough of the slightly off-kilter to make it sound like the WIPERS, or even GANG OF FOUR had just reformed and decided to make it on the backpack pop circuit. Fortunately these chaps don't seem to be gazing too hard at their sneakers. (RK)
(Let's Go, PO Box 156, Campbell, CA 95009-0156)

SILENT NOISE - "Whatever Happened to Us" LP

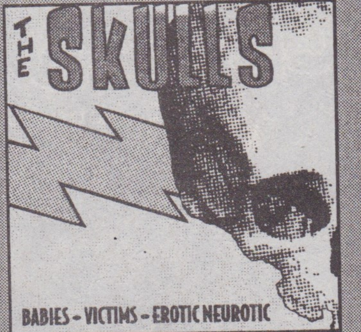
Don't know anything about this band, but from the very little I can glean from the extremely minimalist



packaging (basically, a snippet of a press cutting and the track listing) it looks like they were Norwich's best hope in 1979. If you can imagine a wimpier JAM combined with a wimpier STIFF LITTLE FINGERS but with all the catchiness of both those bands, you can picture what SILENT NOISE sounded like. This is punk without teeth, aimed for the charts (to no avail). The lack of liner notes or an address makes me think this is being put out without the band's knowledge or consent, which is a shame. (AM)
(LDK? no address)

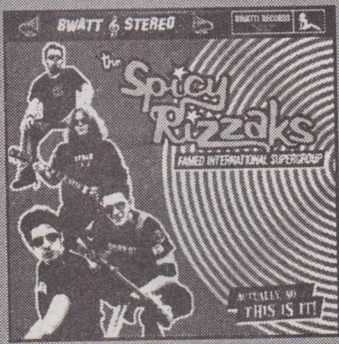
SILENT NOISE - "Rudolf the Red Nosed Reindeer/Let's Twist Again"
.......what the fuck is this?????? .....is this some kinda 70s punk re-ish bootleg shit???? ....well if it is, it ain't very good....they look good though......c'mon kids, get out the ol' punk encyclopedia and look that one up.....fill me in.....!!! The titles of the songs speak for themselves......so boring....I could weep...!!! (SW)
(no address)

SIX PACK - "Fabricka Greska" CD
Über-melodic hardcore from the Croatia that sounds like it could be on Fat Wreck Chords. It's decent enough, but it doesn't really grab me like some of the other stuff from the region has in the past. Lotsa "oohs-n-ahhs" like mid-period BAD RELIGION but without the same punchiness. (MT)
(Dirty Old Town, Nezavisni Zvuk D.O.O., Za Trgovinu I Izdavastvo, K. Tvrtka 7, HR-34000 Pozega, CROATIA, dirtyoldtown@hotmail.com)



SKULLS - "Babies" EP
It's strange, this appears to be a new record by a very old band. I checked to see if it was the same band—it was, and not only that, but one of these tracks, "Victim," was on the *What Is It* comp (along with the GERMS and the DILS) from '82. The SKULLS (from Los Angeles) play fast UK-influenced punk, melodic yet tough. I know they've been playing around the place recently—go check 'em out. (AD)
(Blazing Guns, PO Box 40236, Downey, CA 90239)

SNUFF - "S:9F Disposable Income" CD
Are we taking SNUFF for granted? This is an amazing band that has been around for awhile now. I sometimes forget that. This is another great SNUFF full length. Ranging from great pop to rocking punk, these UK pop punk masters need to make it over here more often. Less varied than more recent releases, this is almost a return to the more guitar heavy early releases. (RL)
(Union, 78 Rachel St. East, Quebec, H2W 1C6, CANADA, www.snuff.net)



SOLEA - "Even Stranger" CD
A supergroup featuring the singer from TEXAS IS THE REASON and the last backing lineup of SAMIAM. Fueled by the always great guitar of Sergie Loobkoff and the strong drumming of Johnny Cruz (also of LIMP fame), this has a nice mid tempo groove. Since the vocals are less raspy than those of SAMIAM, this has a more pop feel without poppy songs. It's good to see seasoned vets still putting out strong stuff. (RL)
(3 Mileage, www.3mileagerecords.com)

SOLEDAD BROTHERS - "Live" LP
I guess the concept of a live album is lost on me. Usually you have to be a big fan to want one because the sound usually sucks or else all it does is prove that the band sounds as good live as it does on record. The latter is the case for SOLEDAD BROTHERS. They are a great live band, they have good songs and have pretty much perfected the modern day version of the white mans blues. I just don't see that this album is necessary just yet. Go see their next show instead. (CK)
(Dim Mak, PO Box 348, Hollywood, CA 90078)

SOUNDS FAMILIAR - "Old Friend" CD
To paraphrase *High Fidelity*'s Rob Gordon, SOUNDS FAMILIAR start strong, take it up a notch, and then cool off so as not to blow their collective wad. Though it never quite picks up again, this CD still makes for a thoroughly enjoyable seven-song ride. These German (I think) dudes kick out some anthemic melodic punk a la HOT WATER MUSIC that makes its point and gets the fuck out (a good strategy, if you ask me). Shockingly enough, the ballads don't suck, despite the liberal sprinkling of flanger. While it has its low points and its uninspired moments both lyrical and musical, I dig it. (MX)
(Weird Science, CL & OH, Romerstrasse 55a, 53111 Bonn, GERMANY, www.weird-science-records.de)

THE SPICY RIZZAKS - "Actually, No... This is it!" CD
A cute little three song CD features the classic rock oriented "Crack the Whip," the hurried rocker "Action Slacks," and the 50s spoofy rocker "Mudflap Girl." Pretty rockin', but they need to fatten up the guitars for a fuller, more classic rock sound. (HM)
(Bwatt!, 97 Clinton St Ste. #1B, NY, NY 10002, www.spicyrizzaks.com)

SPOILD ROTTEN - "Guitarded" CD
I'm trying to remember why I know this band... fuck, I'm a total blank. In any event, this is the whole new pop punk 'n' roll thing that's been going on. Not bad—kinda reminds me of the last two NOBODYS records. 26 tracks is a whole lot of overkill though. God lord, enough already! You're dumb, you're snotty, you like boobs and fart jokes! I get it already! This CD says "Guarantee: 100% Rock 'n' Roll Satisfaction or Your Money Back!!!" My rock 'n' roll was not satisfied. Pay me. Pay me now. (BM)
(Amp, 153 Balsam Ave, South Hamilton, Ontario, L8M 3B6 CANADA)

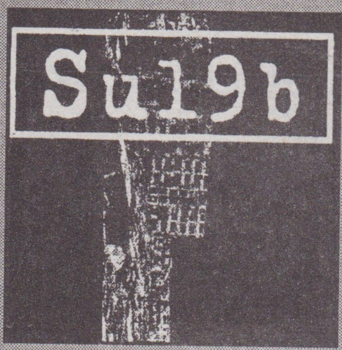
STALAG 13 - "In Control" CD
Does anybody remember Nardcore? The reissue of this classic LP includes bonus tracks from 1983-ish. This was part of California's generic hardcore beginnings. Not generic in a negative sense, just generic in a non-distinctive sense, unlike CIRCLE JERKS or TSOL. Usually lumped with AGRESSION, old school hardcore/skate fans will like this classic release. (RL)
(Dr. Strange)

STRAWBERRY MUD PIE! - "You Sing! Me Play!" CD

A Japanese band with a gal singer. The Shonen Knife comparisons are inevitable. This ranges from RAMONES style to amateur pop. A charming fun release. (RL)
(1 + 2)

SU19B - "False Religion" EP

Japanese doom/grind very similar to countrymen CORRUPTED, only with full-on grind parts. Pretty damn devastating stuff here, the only minus being the identical copycat nature of the trapped-in-tar slow parts (to CORRUPTED), but still—not a bad idea to cop. And the blasts on the fast parts are fucking killer. The cover image of an enormous burnt-out collapsing concrete housing project is a perfect visual analogy for the way this massively heavy record sounds. (EL)
(Blurred, 482-1 Naka, Kambara, Ihara, Shizuoka 421-3213, JAPAN)



THE SUBURBAN KID/THE SLINGSHOT IDOL - split EP

The SLINGSHOT IDOL plays technical hardcore for fans of the LOCUST. Snotty, screaming vocals, fast songs, lots of time changes and played pretty damn well. Lots of distortion and chaos, but still rockin'. I can't really say that you can call samples over a Mr. Clean ad music, but maybe I'm just out of touch. The SUBURBAN KID seems too slow at 33 rpms and too fast at 45 (it is 33). Their songs fall somewhere along the lines of BORN AGAINST. The vocals have a deep growling sound. The songs are up-tempo, with pretty basic guitar bar chord progressions and straightforward drumming. (PA)
(Lilacsky, www.lilacsky.com)

SURVIVORS/A NEW ENEMY - CD

So I get this CD to review—a hated split CD no less—and the first thing I notice is that the label, War Machine, has oh so cleverly written "PROMO" all over the insert booklet and even more cleverly on the CD (the printed art side)—using the wrong kind of marker—a tagging style marker—thusly my CD player won't play the first five tracks: the SURVIVORS songs. I can "rewind" one song back (from track six) to hear the last SURVIVORS song, a RITES OF SPRING cover. A NEW ENEMY plays melodic hardcore and features members of TEAR IT UP and LET IT BURN. Both bands have five songs each. Neither band does anything for me and seeing as how PROMO is written all over it I can't even sell it, so in the trash it goes. (WM)
(War Machine, PO Box 4285, Trenton, NJ 08610, www.warmachinerecords.com)

SWINGIN' UTTERS - "Dead Flowers, Bottles, Bluegrass, and Bones" LP

I'm a firm believer in the theory that punk bands only have a few really good records in them, and this release tends to support that. There are a few good songs ("Hopeless Vows," "Sign in a Window," "Don't Ask Why"), a few that fit into a generic SWINGIN' UTTERS formula, and waaay too many ballads. While I think that the SWINGIN' UTTERS were and still are an awesome live band, this record lacks the energy and intensity of their live shows and doesn't live up to what I think is their best record, *Streets of San Francisco*. (DP)
(Fat, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119)

TAXI - "Like a Dog" LP

......too bad there's no info with this record, because I wanna suck *all* of their dicks!!!! These motherfuckers are pretty fuckin' rockin'......no doubt about it.......!!!!! The sleeve says this little gem was recorded in April/May 2002 in Roma, so maybe that's where they're from....I dunno!!!! But whatever rock these dudes crawled out from under really doesn't matter to me much at the moment....this record is so fucking *sonic* that I'm on the second listen.....!!!! They remind me of a heavy version of the FLYING SPIDERS (a fab old Dutch punk/pop band from the late 70s on EMI) with a bit of hard butt-sex thrown in for the youth, just for spice...!!! Half the record is done in broken English and the other half is done in some other fucking language.....!!! But who listens to the words when you got such good hooks.....TEENGENERATE made a career out of it!!!!!!!! I personally haven't heard punk written or played like this in *years*!!!! Total style, hooks.....comes off natural and sexy.....!!!! Christ, why don't we have bands like this next door???? All we got here in the states is the likes of the STITCHES and NOFX and other similar dogshit.....TAXI is my new prison bitch.....*starting now*!!!! (SW)
(Dead Beat, PO Box 283, Los Angeles, CA)

THE TEARS - "She Ain't Right" EP

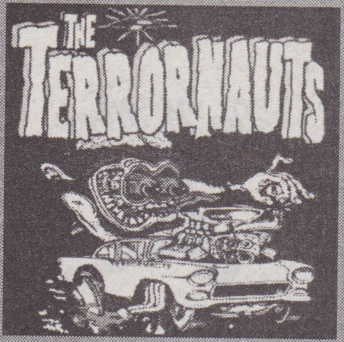
Four young 'uns who sound like they recorded this into a cassette player about five minutes after picking up their instruments for the first time. I mean that as a compliment. There's a raw 60s garage sound here that I really dig and hope to hear more from the TEARS (as in rip, not as in cry). (DP)
(Bancroft, 816 Bancroft St., Port Huron, MI 48060, www.smashintransistors.homestead.com)

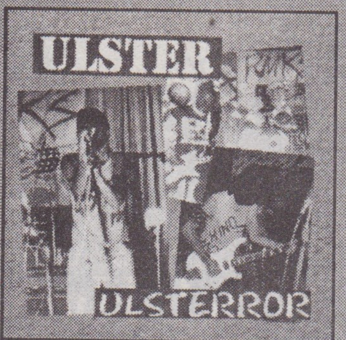
LES TECKELS - "I'm Not So Angry" EP

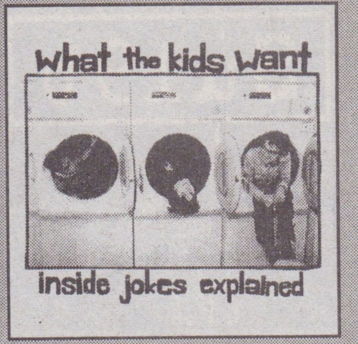
That splendid oi/street punk combo from Paris, France, the DASCHAUNDS (LES TECKELS) has come out with another brilliant record! Very little is known about this band of miscreants. Rumor has it that Iwan, from the NO TALENTS, is partially responsible for this terrible miscarriage of justice. Along with HARD SKIN, LES TECKELS are one of the most sought-after skinhead bands in Europe. This new 45 keeps up the top-notch songwriting. LES TECKELS picks up the oi banner where COCKNEY REJECTS left off on *Greatest Hits Vol. II*. This is a fucking amazing record! (BR)
(Guilty, no address)

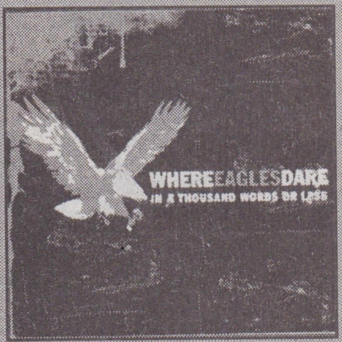
TELEVISION - "The Blow-Up" 2xLP

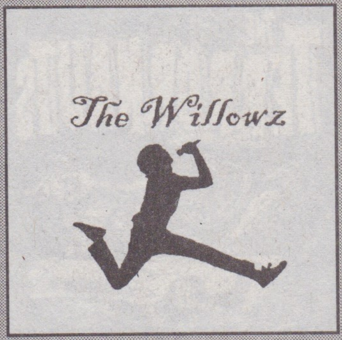
.....oh my, I could go on all day long about TELEVISION, but I won't....*however*, I will have to mention that Terry Ork once said that Richard Lloyd and Richard Hell had the most creamy/milky skin of any of the hot young junkie studs on the music scene in New York at the time ('75)....god bless you Terry, your words mean a lot to me....!!!! Strange that I should be reviewing this record now because it's pretty fucking old, come to think of it....!!!! Even older when you consider it came out as a cassette only thingy way back before most of you readers were born....or still in the sandbox....on ROIR.....so now you have it, on *wax*!!! Two LPs....gatefold....super far out!!!!! I know most of you new punk squirts ain't gonna dig the ol' TELEVISION too much, too arty, not angry enough.....*I know, I know*,....I was once young and clueless too....it's fun to be stoopid.....but once I had a whiff of Richard Lloyd's sweet puckering rosebud, well friends, there was no turning back for this boy.....*I obey television*!!!!!!(SW)
(ROIR, 611 Broadway, Ste. 411, New York, NY 10012)











TERRORNAUTS - "Psyche-Center Blues" CDEP

This kind of music, I guess it's called psychobilly, just doesn't quite suck me in. That creepy echo in the vocals, the obligatory psychosurf tune, one song with psych- in the title, the Rat Fink-style cover art, it all just bugs me. (DP)

(Tuna for Sushi, 7858 Oxon Court, White Plains, MD 20695, www.tunaforsushirecords.com)

THUNDERCRACK - "The Crack" CD

Misbegotten blues riffs, slapback echo and John Spencer's "Bellbottoms" played through a Cuisinart set to "chop". Rock noise with an ever-so-slight *funk* twinge hidden between the notes. THUNDERCRACK aren't frightfully original yet their product is a damn sight more listenable than mosta the dressed-up *Gong Show* rejects that cross my path. "Cheap Cosmetics" kills. (JH)

(Estrusd, PO Box 2125, Bellingham, WA 98227)

TITO'S BOJS - "Electro Istra" CD

Whoa! Hailing from Croatia, these punks present to you fifteen tracks of catchy punk combined with elements of regional folk music. Bizarre but awesome—maybe think MINUTEMEN meets DEZERTER—but still does come close. I love crazy shit like this. (MT)

(Humanitanova, Verdan Miniga, V. Ruzdjaka 8, 1000 Zagreb, CROATIA, marko.vukovi@zamir-zg.ztn.apc.org)

TOY DOLLS - CD

When this LP was released in 2000 it was meant to celebrate 20 years of TOY DOLLS. I didn't realize at the time is also meant to be their last studio LP. Damn, I thought it just another collection (who can keep track of all the TOY DOLLS songs?) This is actually a straightforward release with its share of "anthems," light on the fancy guitar work. If only all legendary punk bands maintained the TOY DOLLS quality. Has the reunion happened yet? (RL)

(Captain Oi)

ULSTER - "Ulsterror" CD

What we got here is some live stuff, some demos, and some miscellaneous, all from 1982-'83, showing ULSTER at their raging Brasilian finest. Starting with a live version of "Ulster" and then fucking *blazing* through eight more live tunes, you can almost feel the singer's spit, and it's easy to imagine people going fucking ballistic. Raw as fuck, everything to 11, and let's fucking GO! Fucking incredible release. AAARRGGGHHH, this is *perfect*! (WN)

(Rua Salim Mahfoud 644, Parque Terra Nova II, Cep 09820-780, Sac Bernardo - SP, BRASIL, vladimir@uol.com.br)

UPRIGHT - "Memories Do Last" EP

Four songs of mid-paced hardcore not unlike later OUTSPOKEN material, with a vocalist that sounds similar to Andy from KILL YOUR IDOLS. Nothing really jumped out at me and bit me in the ass. According to the liner notes UPRIGHT existed between 1994 and 2000. I guess if you grew up watching this band in Germany, then this might have some sentimental value. Otherwise it's nothing really special. (CC)

(Crapchord, c/o Hansi Haug, Grabenstr.15, 73262 Reichenbach/Fils, GERMANY)

VOLT - 12"

I know we all have our dance party-while-stripping-on-the-coffeetable moments, but seriously, what happened to the rock? I guess synthisizers are cool in a DEPECHE MODE, BERLIN, 80s new wave type of way, but they're hard to rock out to. If the FAINT were a Long Island Iced Tea, VOLT would be the same, but without the vodka. (MM)

(Polly Maggoo, 5 rue Guy Moquet, 75017 Paris, FRANCE, http://voltklub.fre.fr)

WEDNESDAYS - "Mystery" EP

The WEDNESDAYS get live. They are little faster, and a tad more punky than most of the rock 'n' roll based Estrus shit I've heard lately. Have no fear, they still retain the fuzzy guitars and lo-fi production you know and love from Estrus. CLONE DEFECTS, and the BIG BOYS, meets a haggard 7 SECONDS ("oh-ohs" ...from *The Crew* era). Good shit. I want this record. (AS)

(Estrus, www.estrus.com)

WHAT THE KIDS WANT - "Inside Jokes Explained" EP

WHAT THE KIDS WANT are from Bloomington, Indiana and features ex-members of the SISSIES and MISO MILITIA. With a lineage like that need I really tell you that it sounds like simple stripped down pop punk with heartfelt reflective lyrics. While I like the songs on this record, the levels are all over the place on this 7" and it makes it a little annoying to listen to. (JF)

($3. ppd: Talking Boy, PO Box 954, Bloomington, IN 47402)

WHERE EAGLES DARE - "In a Thousand Words..." CD

WHERE EAGLES DARE play hardcore in the vein of KID DYNAMITE. These 8 songs, totaling in under 13 minutes, are a non-stop assault of predictable breaks and changes perfect for coordinate your finger-pointing and stagedives to. No boundaries are being broken. It's fun, aggressive, straightforward, full of energy, and fucking loud. (VH)

(Endwell, 19 Stori Rd., Newburgh, NY, 12550, www.endwelletc.com)

WILLOWZ - "That Willowz Feelin'/Think Again"

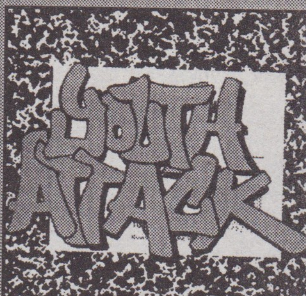
These guys have an old school punk meets power pop thing going on. One side reminds me of the ANGRY SAMOANS and the other of a male JOAN JETT. This is okay for what it is. Maybe a full length make it easier to decide if these guys are special or just another retro band. (RL)

(Posh Boy, PO Box 4474, Palm Desert, CA 92261)

WIPERS - "Box Set" 3xCD

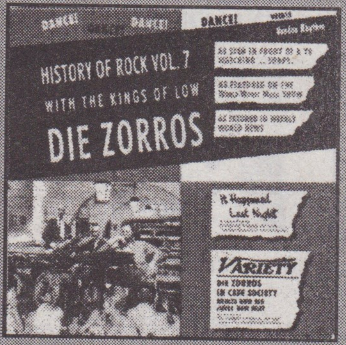
Since the WIPERS were one of the best punk rock bands of all time, they were one of the few whose hard-to-find records I lusted and thirsted after and paid over 15 (but under 25!) dollars for. I'm not the only one to harbor strong feelings about the late 70s/early 80s Portland band, and inevitably, the records were released on CD

after long unavailablity. What wasn't inevitable is that you'd get all three (*Is This Real*, *Youth Of America*, and *Over the Edge*) on one affordable CD, released by Zeno. DIY, though this is one of those "seminal" back catalogues I'm sure the majors drooled all over themselves for. A few months back we played this game at *Maximum:* how many bands have released not one, not two, but *three perfect records*? It's not so easy—you might come to blows, but eventually you'll agree, because there's only really a handful of names on that list. The WIPERS, of course, is one of them. The WIPERS' lanky, big-eyed guitarist/singer Greg Sage was singleminded and adventurous, combining haunting, surfy guitar with the hollow emotion and punk punch and drive of UK bands like WIRE. The songs unapologetically took their time—*Youth Of America* was released in 1980, right in the heart of short and fast, and according to the liner notes, the punks didn't forgive the long songs till about 1986. The WIPERS' essential contradiction: although themes of alienation, confusion, and escape course through the songs, somehow their sound is still sentimental and strangely warm. What can I say about songs like "Is this Real?" "Tragedy," and "Doom Town"? They actually affect you physically, I swear. Adored by punk and hardcore kids alike; part of the bedrock. (AC)
(Zeno, PO Box 97281, Phoenix, AZ 85060)



WITCHHUNT/DEATHBAG - split EP

WITCHHUNT. *Fuuuuuuuuuuuck...* What can a lowly shitbag like me say? Two songs by this trio. Fuck. Woman/man back and forth, entangled vocals. The boy has the stylings of Ryan Shitlist. The women are every powerful, unique vocalist rolled up and spat out a fuckin' punk's pie-hole. And those lyrics: an animal rights song and a number concerning the role Judeo-Christian religion has played in the repression of women. As the oppression and use of women by men follows the human-above-animal mindset, these are two very good songs to put together. The music and arrangements on these songs are crazy! Punk ass shit! with some TEM EYOS KI, SUBMISSION HOLD, and N.W. style shit thrown in. Fuck... So, and we also have DEATHBAG. Whoa! They fucking rip too! Another crazy-perspectived animal rights song, although calling it that is almost belittling. It is more of a tune talking about the pain we cause to this planet and everything on it, coming back to haunt us. And we deserve it. The vox is kinda TRAGEDY. Some of the other vox is sorta RUIDO. The music is complex guitar-driven heaviness, which has awesome breakdowns into feedback and beeping and picking. They got three songs on this split, all of them great. This is the shit, muddafucker. If you see them live, I will die of envy, then kick my own ass for being a WITCHHUNT/DEATHBAG-missing poseur. (JA)
(Hemorrhaging Loudness, 10 Beech St, Ilion, NY 13357)



YOUTH AGAINST CONFORMITY/ANTIKÖRPUS - split LP

ANTIKÖRPUS continue to crank out quality blasts of Brazilian hardcore with an Anarcho political bent. Nice counter melodies with the guitarwork versus the vocals keep it interesting. Fans of other modern Brazilian thrashers like I SHOT CYRUS or ABUSO SONORO would do themselves a favor in picking this up. YOUTH AGAINST CONFORMITY take us on a trip across three tracks of dual vocaled raw yet melodic hardcore that has a slight NYHC mosh influence. Great stuff. (MT)
(Heresia, Alcides C. Da Silva Jr., Cx. Postal 183, São Vicente/SP, 11201-970, BRASIL, heresia.rcs@hotmail.com)

YOUTH ATTACK - "I Hate Lies" EP

This band is going to get compared a lot to CRIPPLED YOUTH, which is surely what they were going for when they put the hockey players from the cover of *Join the Fight* on their B-side label. Personally, I immediately thought VIOLENT CHILDREN or REFLEX FROM PAIN before I thought CRIPPLED YOUTH, but since most people will be using this comparison, I thought it would be practical to describe how this record is *not* like their pre-BOLD predecessors. Aside from the fact that the singer sounds young and they have a similar song structure, YOUTH ATTACK definitely take a more angry, elitist straight edge approach with songs like "BSEMMBTY" and "15 and You Lack," regardless, their execution is solid and their songs are pretty catchy. Worth checking out. (CC)
(Cadmium Sick, PO Box 35934 Brighton, MA 02135)

Z/28 – "Wrecks from the Highway" CD

Rockabilly gearhead music from Scotland. Their influences are very obviously American and it leaves the whole thing feeling very ungenuine. Fans of REVEREND HORTON HEAT and SUPERSUCKERS might like it though. They cover the theme from *The Dukes of Hazzard*. (AD)
(JSNTGM, PO Box 1025, Blackpool, FY3 0FO, UK)

DIE ZORROS - "History of Rock, Vol. 7" CD

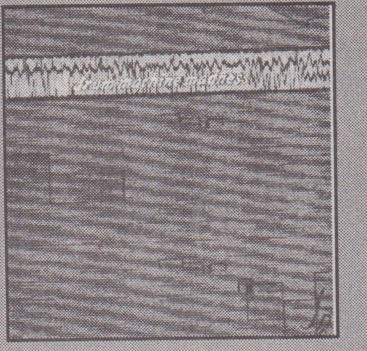
What do you do if you're stuck in a boring-ass place like Switzerland? I know one guy who came to the US so he could spin records in gay discos and watch 50s bad girl movies on TV (a big Beverly Garland fan, he was slightly disappointed in his latter hope). If you're LIGHTNING BEAT-MAN, on the other hand, you stay put and keep coming up with different bands. We here find him drumming behind a guitarist and organist who perform Eurolounge versions of "Be Bop a Lula," "Stairway to Heaven" (best version ever!), "Blue Moon," etc., as well as a few originals. The concept: "Adults now dig Juves' New Beat." Might be as good a party disc as LOS PUNK ROCKERS' *Exitos de los Sex Pistols*. (DD)
(Voodoo Rhythm, Jurastrasse 15, 3013 Bern, SWITZERLAND)

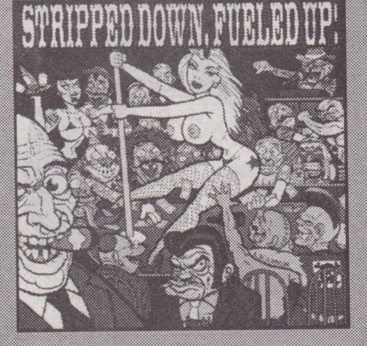
V/A - "Bulb Singles #1" CD

A great collection of early singles from Bulb. It includes the first fantastic single from the MONARCHS which features the classic song "Dead Boyfriend" plus their other Bulb single (six great tracks). Disappointingly there is six minutes of silence at the end of the "Wanted Man" track before it goes into "Dead Boyfriend". It really ruins the flow. There are two singles from my other favorite Bulb band PREHENSILE MONKEYTAILED SKINK who perfected a twisted psyche rock comparable only to the greatness of MONOSHOCK, plus their name is fun to say. Also included are COUCH, CORNELIUS GOMEZ, BULLET IN THE HEAD and SHRIEK. Eight great singles in all. An amazing collection if you only just heard of Bulb or you simply want the convenience of your favorite songs on one CD. Only 500 copies so don't snooze. (CK)
(Bulb, 4609 Hunt Rd., Adrian, MI 49221)

V/A - "Clepunk.Comp" CD

What, am I the staff Smog Veil reviewer? Well, these are new, that's *current*, Cleveland-area punk bands on this here CD comp. A brief listing: HELLVIS, AFO, VERMIN, STANDING 69'S, ALLERGIC TO WHORES, CYPHER, PAR FIVE, many, many more. Too many differing styles here to grab an individual's tastes for the





length of the whole thing, but burly well-produced punk is the dominant ethic. This...is Cleveland. (RW)
(Smog Veil, 316 California Ave, #207, Reno, NV, 89509, www.smogveil.com)

V/A - "Dirtnap Across the Northwest" CD

A super strong comp featuring the likes of the EPOXIES, NEW TOWN ANIMALS, the HUNCHES, the SPITS, and many more. 31 punk and new wave songs that don't let up. A breath of fresh air in the glut of compilations. (RL)
(Dirtnap, PO Box 21249, Seattle, WA 98111)

V/A - "Drinking About Songs" 2xLP

These Very Small compilations are reason enough to go and get a record player (they don't really work on CD) and the *Songs About Drinking* compilation of eight or nine (can that be right?) years ago was one of the best put together comps ever. I'm not exactly sure if this is the first follow up, but it is to me anyway so...here's the sequel. Thirty-three tracks with one common theme—boozin'. Along with a hilarious collection of movie samples you have contributions from the likes of LOPEZ, BAR FEEDERS, MINOR DISTURBANCE, FLATUS, CIVIC MINDED 5, YOUR MOTHER, DING DANG, HARD SKIN, GRABASS CHARLESTONS, SUPERCHINCHILLARESCUEMISSION, THE AUTHORITIES (sadly not *The* Authorities), and SASSHOLE, plus many more. The music's fine but this is the concept album among concept albums and it's the album itself rather than the bands involved which make it special. Honorable mention for best song titles go to YOUR MOTHER for "Friends Don't Let Friends Drink and Talk," GRABASS CHARLESTONS for "Check Me Out, I'm Stupid," and PELVIS WESLEY for "Head Like a Holy Shit My Head Hurts." Essential on colored vinyl... Ah, punk and beer, like ebony and ivory they live together in perfect harmony. (Or is that glue?) (AD)
($11 ppd: Very Small, PO Box 622, Mosier, OR 97040 www.verysmallrecords.com)

V/A - "Drum Machine Madness" EP

The intro alone on this one-sided 7" is worth the price of the disc—a hilarious parody of most people's first attempts at drum programming. To go from that to the full-on grind insanity witnessed on the following tracks is sheer genius. As you may ascertain from the title, this is an all-too-brief collection of mostly one- or two-man grind outfits exclusively using drum-machines instead of neanderthal drummers, and the results are mind-blowing. You'd need a drummer twice as manic as Witte and the NILE drummer combined to keep up with these tracks. The bands here are: NEMO, PILGRIM FETUS, ALIEN CRUCIFIXION, WADGE, and of course, AGORAPHOBIC NOSEBLEED, the former three being new to me—I'd definitely like to hear more from them. A very cool (and too damn short!) grind record. (EL)
(Robotic Empire, 12001 Aintree Ln, Reston, VA 20191)

V/A - "Finding a Voice" CD

First and foremost, it should be mentioned that this is a benefit for a group called People First from Montana. Apparently this group's purpose is to help people with disabilities educate, organize, and support each other. With that said, let's move on to the tunes. This compilation contains some quality bands. The DREAD, LACERATION, CATHY AMES, USMC, EAST COAST PANIC, HUMPY, SUBINCISION, MISCREANTS, and many more tear through a variety of thrash and punk, making for a good listen. As with most comps, there are a few songs here that don't make the grade, but overall this is worth a listen. (RC)
(Repetitively Futile, PO Box 1311, Missoula, MT 59806-1311, www.mtpunk.com/futile)

V/A - "Question of Tolerance" CD

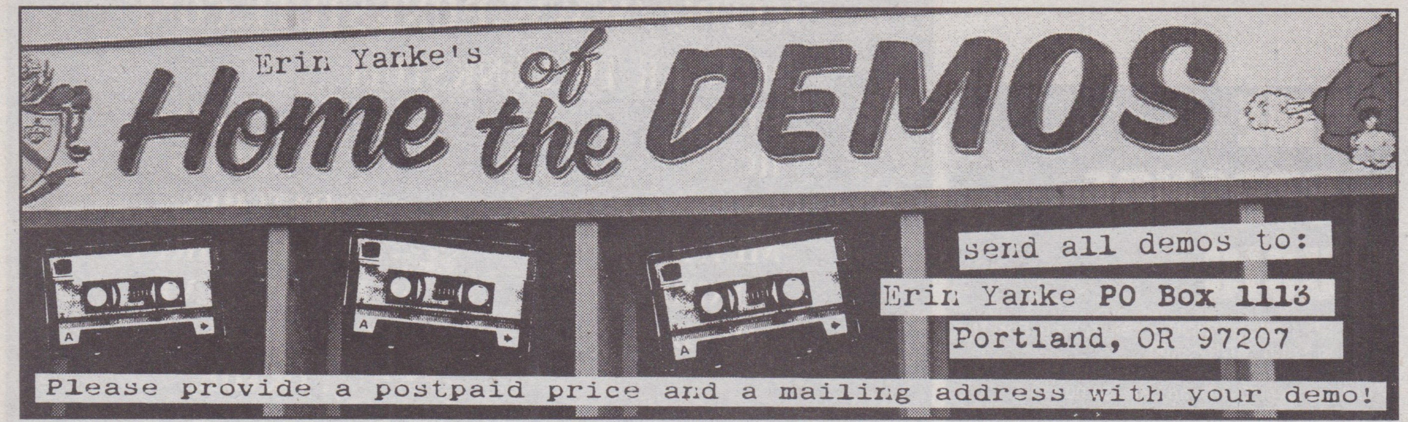
OK, first song into this compilation and I am already not thinking too highly of it. It starts off with a pretty bad metallic screamo song with a mix of screamed and sung vocals. And from there on it doesn't get much better. There is quite a variety of styles, with a mix of grind, pop, thrash, punk, and even some more emo bands. Fortunately, there were a few standouts. ISP from France, LOS PUNCH from Slovenia, and MAN IN SHACKLES from Sweden were kicking hard, but not enough to keep this compilation afloat. (RC)
(Frontrock, PO Box 48, 2000 Maribor, SLOVENIA)

V/A - "Stripped Down, Fueled Up" CD

A fourway split with ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN, JED WHITEY, the PUPPIES, and IRONBOSS. You can probably guess the general sound of this. I'm a huge fan of the hard and fast Camaro rock genre and I like ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN and JED WHITEY, but the PUPPIES and IRONBOSS cross into that slower tempo wanker territory that I don't like to go. (DP)
(Out of the Loop, PO Box 222, Tuart Hill, W.A. AUSTRALIA 6939, www.outoftheloop.com.au)

V/A - "Will Not Clear Man" CD

Four Illinois-based bands inhabit this label sampler. Quality aside, this is a welcome approach to a format dominated by 30-band, 70-minute CDs packed to the fragile plastic rims with all manner of pointless crap. SEEDY SIDE CONTROVERSY play straightforward melodic punk, BURN ELGIN take a slightly dancier, more post-punk approach, OVER AND OVER bring the metal-tinged, spastic screamo, and MERIDIANS DIVIDED do the acoustic alternarock thing while sucking less than PEARL JAM. Points for such a mixed bag, but I can't work up any greater emotional response than a defeated sigh of "meh." (MX)
(Will Not Clear Man, PO Box 911, Elgin, IL 60121, www.wilnotclearman.com)



ASSOGORE is great, energetic and pissed off midtempo hardcore with equal metal and straightforward punk rock roots. Good lurching slow parts and epileptic fit fast parts mix it up. The deep shouting vocals sometimes growl, but for the most part they are just pissed. Hell yeah. ($3 ppd. or free on the interweb: www.asogore.cjb.net. 9 song cassette, lyrics included. 148 London ST., Peterborough, ON K9H 2Y5.)

BILLY GROGAN'S PROPHECY have a singer who croons like the guy who sang "Mexican Radio". Musically, they're midtempo and play standard rock songs, that average about 3 minutes, and sound teen angsty to me. Sometimes they pick up the pace, but not often. ($5 ppd. 13 song CD, lyrics included. Mark Johnson, Dept. of Psychology, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742.)

CITY OF LIARS mixes up the blazing yelling hardcore with slower bits that define screamo. On the last song they get a groove for a couple minutes, and go back to the tough stuff. There may be a keyboard in there, but those noises might just be odd guitar sounds. (4 song CD, lyrics included. 1046 N. Honore St. Apt #1-F, Chicago, IL 60622.)

C TOWN PSYCHOS play a sloppy style of punk, midtempo and kind of garage, but maybe that's just the lo-fi recording style. The vocals are mostly shouted, with the backup vocals sound like a group of friends hoisting beers and shouting along. Nothing fancy going on, but they sound like you couldn't help but have fun seeing them live. (10 song CD, no lyrics included. 8631 Brookstead Dr., Charlotte, NC 28215.)

FUCKED UP KID wear their influences on their sleeve...basement style mix of CRIMPSHRINE (the more musical and lyrical influence) and PEGBOY (vocal style and song structure). It's a good soundtrack for this global warming February morning. ($2 ppd., or a bunch of stamps or a trade! Tape trading warms my heart. 6 song cassette, lyrics included. PO Box 21530, 1850 Commercial Drive, Vancouver, BC V5N-4A5.)

I ADAPT plays the youth crew sounds of Iceland! They've got more of a hard rock edge mixing it up, than a straight up metal influence. Pretty tough, no nonsense, played fast and solid. The vocals are full on shouting guy coming at ya, with a chorus of yell-along guys. Comes with a hardcore fanzine, but unfortunately for me it's in the Icelandic language. (8 Euros ppd. 9 song CD, lyrics included. To: Birkir F. Vidarsson, Hverafold 21, 112 Reykjavik, Iceland.)

LAST MISSION are catchy, melodic modern big pants style punk. It's recorded clean, and the singing has only a little sore throat edge to them. It's pretty tame in general. (7 song CD, lyrics included. 20 Spars Ave., Providence, RI 02908.)

MINDLESS REBELLION are a pretty straightforward fast punk band, kind of metallic intros, and fancy guitar work, but mostly solid rocking punk. The vocals are the good ranting vocal style, kind of sing-songy, but tough as hell. ($4 ppd. 6 song CD, lyrics included. 1727 Dole St. Apt. 3, Honolulu, HI 96822.)

MORAL HAZARD play midtempo no-nonsense punk that sounds mean and full, some little guitar leads, but nothing gets in the way of the driving feeling behind it. The vocals are mostly spoken, with a little singing in the mix. (14 song CD, lyrics included. 32150 Hwy 17, Chalk River, ON KoI 1Jo, Canada.)

I apologize to **THE NEW CRIME ICONS**, as my CD player doesn't play those little 3-inch CDs. I'll keep trying at friends' houses around town, but if you want to tape it for me and send a cassette, remind me of this note, and I'll take care of business.

138 is ethereal, more like soundtrack music than a band you'd go out to see. Lots of layering and collage stuff going on. It's not music I'm very familiar with, but I do like the layered music without noise bits that actually make it harder to hear. (3.8 pounds in the UK, oversees 4 pounds. I don't have one of those cool L's on the keyboard, damn this America! 3-song CD, lyrics included. Studio 24, 63 Castletown Road, London, UK)

THE ORIGINAL THREE play stripped down rockaroll, that's sort of fast for that genre. Their singer's got the shouted but moaning vocal balance just right! ($5 ppd. 6 song CD, no lyrics included. 3119 Magazine ST. Upper Apt., New Orleans, LA 70115.)

PELVIS WESLEY are back, and we are happy about it. They sound like a band this time, as opposed to an apartment full of friends with good jokes and spare time. But the midtempo straightforward rocking punk is catchy and the vocals are snotty and sneering. I'm a fan. ($3 ppd. 13 song CD, lyrics included. 2410 SE Taylor, Portland, OR 97214.)

REACCION is musically in the tradition of Midwestern hardcore, tough with a titch of melody, but the pace is midtempo for hardcore these days. The vocals trade between a sore throat shouting guy and a more sing-songy girl who also sometimes has the screaming going on. I think they sing in both English and Spanish, and the lyric sheet has both languages. (5 song cassette, lyrics included. PO Box 5027, Chicago, IL 60680.)

RONA play their punk with hooks on the faster side of midtempo, like the 80s hardcore before the "crossover"... with drive and spirit! Good half sung and half spoken vocals with the gang coming in for the choruses. ($2-$3 or trade highly encouraged. 3 song CD, lyrics included. Ave. Magdaleno 1102 Apt. D-5 Condo. Condado Center, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00907.)

RU486 fucking rock! At first, they mostly sound like FILTH, totally tough and pissed, but then they sneak up with a catchy sort of NAKED RAYGUN sound, and then bring it together to form something uniquely their own. Yee haw! ($3 ppd. for the CD, $5 ppd. for the cassette. 10 song CD, lyrics included. 523 W. South ST. Apt. K, Kalamazoo, MI 49007.)

SHELL SHOCK made my roommate stick his head in the door and go "MINOR THREAT?" Then another roommate came in and said "Are you listening to DEPRIVED?" That pretty much covers it. (5 song CD, lyrics included. 11 Covert St. Montrose, NY 10548.)

THE SOUTH play the emo hardcore, flavored with melody and some straight forward rocking parts, but the vocals are always deep down, full lung screaming style. ($6 ppd. 9 song CD, lyrics included. PO Box 5335, St. Augustine, FL 32085.)

THE STOCKHOLM SYNDROME is a cool post-punk sort of band. The songs are slow to midtempo, and there's effect-ish stuff going on to set a mood, then it gets into sparse and sort of catchy grooving songs. The feeling is detached and doomed, but dance your way to oblivion. There's one vocalist, but sometimes he layers up. He's mostly sort of speaking, but sometimes he croons a little. This is good! (4 Pounds in England, $7 World, ppd. 9 song CD, lyrics included. PO Box 45, Mirfield W. Yorks, WF 14 9YQ, England.)

STREET CONFUSION are raw and engaging. Their songs are simple, in the way where you immediately start dancing, and by the time the first chorus shows up, you're yelling "destroy society" along with them. Straightforward, with a pace that's slow to midtempo, with a ranting vocalist who sings a little bit. Sometimes the drums sound like a drum machine (bad), and there's keyboard bits in parts of the song, but it's not a consistent instrument. (6 song CD, no lyrics included. 1501 E. Grand Ave. #6122, Escondido, CA 92027.)

TOO MANY SCREAMING CHILDREN play lurching metallic hardcore for the most part, but include moments when the spazz button gets pushed and things get crazy. The vocals are dueling, and of the high pitched screaming dude kind fighting with the "how low can you go" guttural satan voice. (11 song CD, lyrics included. 1503 Pacific St. #2, Bakersfield, CA 93305.)

TREASON are tough and pissed and play solid mid-80s hardcore, with some skilled guitar playing weaving between the bar chords. The vocals are reminiscent of Chavo, but sometimes a bit more growly. ($5. song CD, lyrics included. Perdoncin, 760 Brady Ave. Apt. #116, Bronx, NY 10462.)

THE TURN OFFS play the rockaroll slow and it's reminiscent of the covers of early rock songs that the English punkers used as filler back in the day. The vocals have a good moaning quality going on. They cover "Chinese Rock". (5 song CD, no lyrics included. 17760 Corte Erito, San Diego, CA 92128.)

UPX are almost totally straightforward pop punk, who sound equally influenced by WEEZER and SCREECHING WEASEL. The singer has an equal mix of crooning and snottiness in his vocals, but occasionally a croaking bit comes up. ($5 ppd. 8 song CD, lyrics included. 211 Parkway Dr., Newport News, VA 23606.)

WAR SQUAD plays classic straight edge hardcore, fast part mosh part style, with the vocals coming at you most of the time as spitting and snotty yelling, and talking vocals show up over the slow parts. The covers really tell you where they're coming from: 7 SECONDS, DYS, and SOA. ($2 ppd. 11 song cassette, lyrics included. 867 Bridle Lane, Webster NY 14580.)

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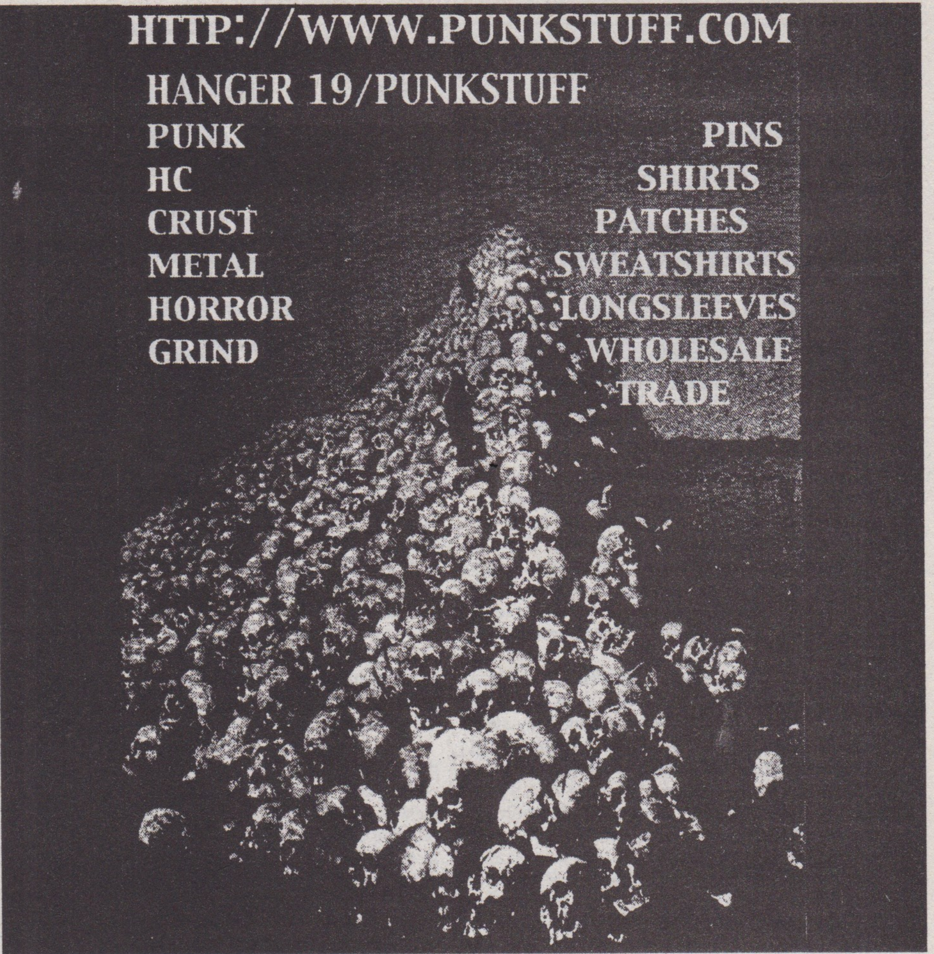

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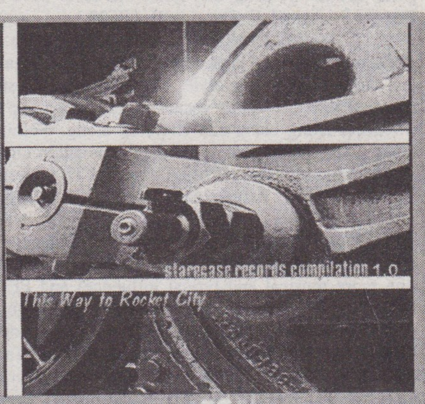

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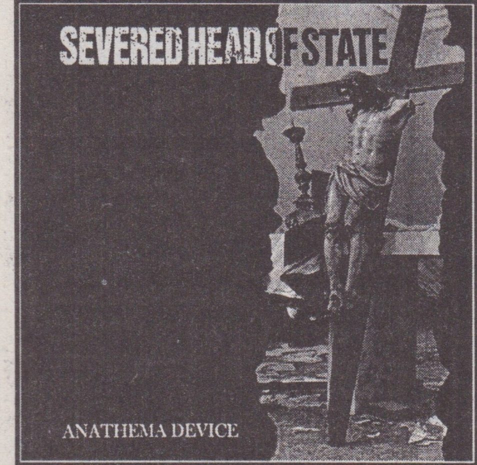

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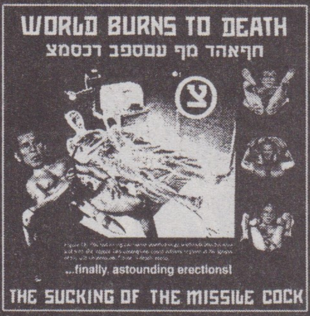

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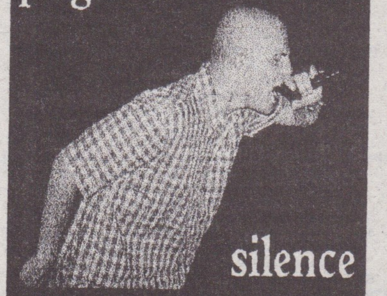

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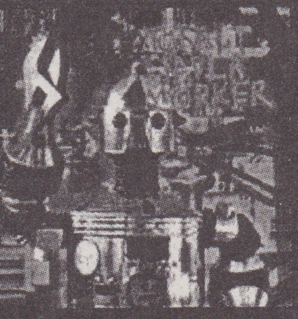

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House On Fire - s/t 7" [1-2-3-4 Go! Records] - $2.75
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Incontrollados - Hvem Vil Det Gavne? 7" [Kick-n-Punch Records] - $3.50
Kill-A-Watts - Lets Get High Voltage! 7" [Flying Bomb] - $3.00
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ZINES

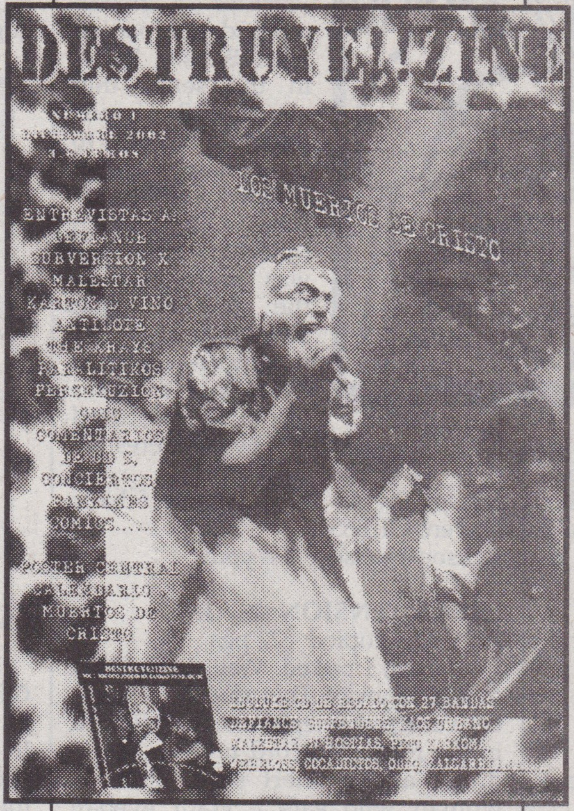
Reviews by: (AC) Arwen Curry, (AR) Aragorn, (JB) Julia Booze, (CB) Chanel Bowman, (BD) Ben Ditch, (MD) Mikel Delgado, (SD) Sara Double-Ears, (KE) Kara Electric, (JH) Jeff Heermann, (HH) Harald Hartmann, (CJ) Chloe Jensen, (JM) Jeff Mason, (JL) Jennifer L. Mushnick, (MN) Mimi Nguyen, (CR) Casey Ress, (MT) Mike Thorn, (GZ) Gordon Zola.

Please send your zine in for review. Write down any information you want included in the review; method of printing, number of pages, issue number and post paid price. If you want us to include a foreign post paid price, tell us. If you accept trades, tell us. The only information we will include is what you provide us.

ADIJO PAMET #9 / $3 or trade
11 x 8 - copied - 32 pgs - Croatian
Wow, fun punk rock from southern Europe! This issue features interviews with the Streetwalkin Cheetahs, the Damn Luckies, Termiti, and Sounds Of Subterrania! Records. There are also some cool record and zine reviews. Plus there is a listing of Jeff Dahl's discography, and an homage to Dee Dee. Great fun punk zine! (HH)
Gunduuceva 12 / 44320 Kntina / Croatia
www.adijopamet@yahoo.com

BITE BACK vol. 2, #1, Winter 2003 / donation
8.5 x 11 - printed - 16 pgs
An Animal Liberation Front support vehicle, this slick quarterly features Rod Cornado and Ingrid Newkirk, short bits on imprisoned activists, contact lists, how-to's and how-we-did-it's. Graphically it's pretty professional looking, with plenty of photos of cute rescued critters. The paper is that crazy plastic-y kind, like a high-end catalog would be printed on; I'd have thought they'd use the money for criminal defense lawyers instead. The highlight for me was "The Good Activist's Handbook," with advice to avoid incarceration—this page is worth a donation for sure. The story of mink farm raids also impressed me. Hopefully a $2 donation would let them break even. (JM)
222 Lakeview Ave / Ste 160-231 / West Palm Beach, FL 33401
www.directaction.info

BOOTLEG #1 / 2 stamps
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 8 pgs
How Much Art Can You Take? for the junior-college-or-junior-high? crowd. Unapologetic, morbid half-assedness I find strangely charming, but really, I think it's just me. "A few days ago my 9-year-old brother told me punk was dead. He said he knew because no one in his class listened to punk. He seems to think that his class covers all of the demographics." (AC)
Andrew Weathers / 104 Harrington Pt. / Chapel Hill, NC 27516



BRAZEN HUSSY #7 / $2
7 x 8.5 - copied - 36 pgs
This one has a lot of style, not as much substance. It has that *Cometbus* look, with lots of photos, bold graphics, plus a touch of that Gainesville style. There are lots of travel stories and a long piece on confronting an abuser. The rest of it relies on the strengths of the comics/graphics, which look good. (MD)
PO Box 13105 / Gainesville, FL 32604

BROADSIDE # 23 / $1 or 3 stamps
7 x 8.5 - copied - 10 pgs
If you love the Pogues, you might know everything that's in here. If you're Pogues-curious, or a newbie, check this out. It details all the Pogues recordings (including many boots) and lists a bunch of websites, and of course a review of Shane's book. No pictures of his teeth, though. (MD)
PO Box 6467 / Plymouth, MI 488170
sycabilly@att.net

CRACKS IN THE WALLS # 3 / $1
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 20 pgs
Sometimes I have a conversation with a stranger for a few minutes before I realize that maybe they're more than just a little strange, they're actually insane. Reading *Cracks in the Walls* kind of feels like one of those encounters. It's less of a zine and more of a personal diatribe, complete with lots of words in ALL CAPS. *CITW* contains stories regarding the battle against conformity, corporate dominance, being trapped, and the philosophical roots of the war on terrorism. It's a bit dry and hard to read. (CR)
Andy / 2 Tinkham Glenn / Wilbraham, MA 01095

CRUSH KILL DESTROY #1 / free, send stamp
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 10 pgs
Choppy, gritty, punk as hell and yours for the mere cost of a stamp. Boredom channeled into a productive result. Show reviews, rec reviews with a rating scale of 1 to 5,

an interview with pissed young straight-edgers xFilesx, and a handy rundown of Dr. Joey Edge's fashion don'ts ("backpacks in the pit: do you like having your possessions smashed? Dumbass"). (JH)
1400 Spruce Pl #8 / Minneapolis, MN 55403
crushkilldestroypunx@hotmail.com

DESTRUYE ZINE! #1 / 3.6 Euros
8 x 12 - printed - 40 pgs
It's a brand new, glossy covered spiky punk zine from Madrid, called *Destroy!* Actually, its full name is *Buscaydestruye*, which apparently was the name of another fanzine in the 80s. Editor Miguel Destroy (Destruye) starts off with an interview with Los Muertos de Cristo, who as best as I can figure out, is a Spanish shock punk/art band, perhaps like a goofy Feederz? Other interviews, in a pretty impressive roster for a first issue, include the Krays, from NY, Spain's Subversion, Antidote, and Defiance, to name a few. Concert and record reviews play second fiddle toward the rear. You'll find a few old pics and cartoons in here, but no politics. (AC)
Miguel Destruye / Apdo 1140 / 28800 / Alcala de Henares / Madrid, Spain
destruye@terra.es
www.destruye.cjb.net

EQUALIZING DISTORT #3 / free?
8.5 x 11 - copied - 16 pgs
I'm adding this zine onto the ever-growing "convincing arguments that Canada rules" list. Apparently an offshoot of the local weekly underground hardcore radio show, it's stripped down in a good way. Interviews with the Tijuana Bibles and DS-13 are interesting but not too long-winded. The main focus of this issue is a sort of year-end record review of 2002. It's very comprehensive—these Gauze fans know what they're talking about. If you're into hardcore, thrash, or whatever the buzzword is these days, you'd probably be into *Equalizing Distort*. What with this zine and our cowboy president, moving to Canada is looking more and more appealing. (CJ)
91 St. George St / Toronto, ON / M5S 2E8 / Canada
equalizingXdistort@ciut.fm

EXCOMMUNICATION #2 / $1
8.5 x 11 - printed - 48 pgs
Subtitled as "the interview fanzine," *Excommunication* delivers just that: interviews with Rich Mackin, Fat Mike, Common Rider, Death by Stereo, The Juliana Theory, and more. This zine reminds me very much of *Verbicide* (its glossy-covered companion from Scissor Press) in the sense that many of the bands interviewed seem to be major label Warped Tour hopefuls. The Rich Mackin interview was pretty rad, but the others just seemed boring and repetitive—maybe if I was into the kind of bands featured here I would have been interested. (CJ)
Scissor Press / 32 Alfred St / New Haven, CT 06512
jackson@scissorpress.com

FREAK TENSION #8 / free?
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 22 pgs
I laughed, I puked. Well, I felt like I might, anyway. This zine is 22 pages of overactive imagination manifested in the form of record reviews, anecdotes, and a short story about a woman who eats a giant eyeball which then reproduces inside of her and bursts out of her stomach (*Aliens*-style). There are also tales of Midwestern debauchery (crashing parties and setting off bottle rockets in one's mouth) and getting kicked out of a Billy Idol show. Reading Matt's writing kinda makes me feel like I'm on acid, which could be either a good or bad thing. You decide. (CJ)
Matt Johnson / PO Box 22163 / Green Bay, WI 54305

GO METRIC Winter '02-'03 / $2
This is a great read. First of all, it includes Maddy from *Tight Pants* comparing the Boys to the Dead Boys, and she's such a good writer I'd read her high school social studies papers if I could get my hands on them. Interviews with Jim Munroe and the guy who did a documentary on tribute bands are exceptional and should be required reading for all those people putting out the Same Boring Interview in every issue of their zine. Also includes pieces on Ben Weasel vs. Yes, Godzilla history, the ten greatest non-US/non-UK rock bands, MicroCineFest review and much, much more. All the articles are well-written. This is definitely worth your $. (GZ)
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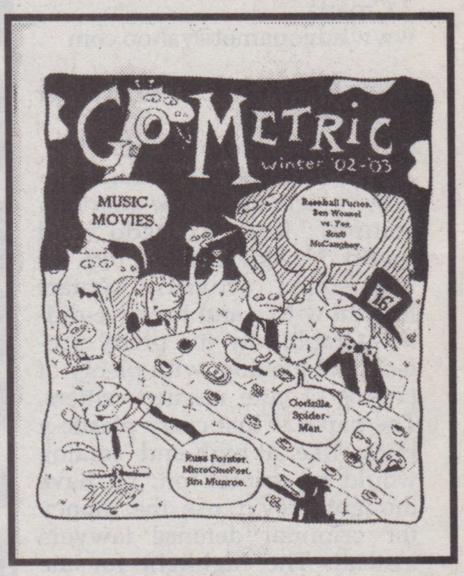
gogometric@yahoo.com



GREEN ANARCHY #11 - $3
22 x 17 - printed - 24 pgs
In this newsprint edition, the anarcho-primitivists from Eugene tackle their hated archnemesis, "science," in a distressingly one-note series of articles about patriarchy, colonization, and other evils. The leading essay, begins reasonably enough with the sentiment that science is not a "neutral" pursuit of knowledge, but quickly descends (as does the rest of this issue) into a mystification of its imagined opposite: a "natural"

lifestyle best personified by the much celebrated "aboriginal" or "indigenous" peoples. What is passed off as "respect" instead becomes a set of demands, including what anthropologist Liisa Malkki calls the "spatial incarceration of the native." The romantic vision of the indigenous as necessarily rooted to the earth problematically essentializes and animalizes the indigenous, which reproduces colonial attitudes toward the indigenous. Sure, these anarcho-primitivists say "native=good," but in revaluing the so-called native, they don't challenge the structure of the binary "native/civilized" at all. Whatever. Rounding out this issue is the usual set of updates about actions, political prisoners, and poetry. (MN)
Green Anarchy / PO Box 11331 / Eugene, OR 97440
greenanarchy@tao.ca

GROWING UP DYSFUNCTIONAL #1 / $1.50
4.25 x 5.5 - copied - 14 pgs
This account of familial abuse is a straightforward chronology of particularly violent events in the writer's eighteen years of life. Star views the zine process as a form of therapy—making a historical record, of sorts—and hopes that readers will also benefit somehow. Accompanied by stick figures illustrating the abuse, the account is just as minimal and sparse. What is with the price?! (MN)
Star Morris / 24 Tampa Ave / Asheville, NC 28806

HOLU U BUIKU #7 / trade or stamps
8 x 6 - copied - 40 pgs - Russian
Excellent zine, easy to understand, with cool graphics. The problem is, it's written in Russian, making it nearly impossible for me to read. There are plenty of interviews, including one with Felix Von Havoc. There are also lots of interesting record reviews, commentary, and scene reports. My suggestion: get the zine and use it as a resource if you enjoy Russian punk. It looks hella cool! (HH)
Dmitrij Ivanov / PO Box 30 / St Petersburg-9 / 195009 Russia
www.k_and_f.chat.ru

IMAGINE # 5 / donation
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 68 pgs
I think the photos on the front and back cover will keep the kids chuckling for a while—they did at my house. Inside are no advertisements, but in their place are a long letters column, many brief bits of news and analysis, a long debunking of the theories of John Zerzan and the idea that Jesus was an anarchist, and many examples of the church and the state making themselves look bad by saying what makes sense to them. He poses a few real-life problems (eg. the neighbor's dog barks incessantly) and asks readers how they would solve them in an anarchist manner. I enjoyed this quite a bit and recom-

mend sending for a copy—he asks for $4 if you live in Mexico or Canada and $5 for the rest of the world outside the US. (JM)
PO Box 8145 / Reno, NV 89507

FULL GALLOP #10 / $2, $4 world
8.5 x 11 - copied - 76 pgs
This immediately reminded me of *Scam* zine, the layout style and kind of sloppy handwriting. *Full Gallop* is a collaboration of many individuals, brought to you in one nifty package. There are hand-painted pages and little bits and pieces stapled in here. The writing is varied—from prose and personal writing, to letters, self-healing tips, and moving stories. There's also lots of art and comics in here too. Something for everyone—this is the kind of zine you could spend many hours with. Thumbs up! (MD)
Dan B / PO Box 582514 / Minneapolis, MN 55458

KOEKRAND #95 / $3
8 x 6 - copied - 28 pgs - Dutch
Great zine with lots of cool record reviews and graphics. There is a brief article on Muslim punks and a couple of columns. Definitely, a good read! (HH)
Johan van Leeuwen / Laan van Berlioz 6 / 2151 GR Nieuw Vennep / Holland

THE LITTLE BLACK STAR #24 / SASE
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 4 pgs
It's like the *MRR* news, only they mail it out every two weeks. This issue mostly deals with the executive branch of the US government and how they ain't good for you or me or the people of Iraq. They also print their income and expenses. For a fundraiser you can get a pin for $2, or just send whatever cash you can spare. I love this thing. (JM)
PO Box 197 / Lewisburg, PA 17837
www.littleblackstar.com

MACHORKA #3 / ?
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 34 pgs
I appreciate the effort of this guy to put out an English-as-a-second-language (Italian is his first) zine all about the current state of activist throughout Europe. Basic, straightforward news. Includes info about Belgian hunger strikes, No Border camps, and lots about political prisoners. (SD)
Battagalia Gianni / Piazza Assietta 9 / 10050 Sauze D'Oulx / Torino / Italy
machoorka@email.it

MY PINK SCARF #11 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 84 pgs
There is something about these vague recollections of the weekdays that charms the hell outta me. *My Pink Scarf* had me when I read the words, "I came home one Friday and put my hands on my knees, leaning over boot prints in my three feet by two feet spot. The sproutlings I had been watching were all gone," followed by, "I'm sorry if I ever stepped on anyone's sproutlings." Albeit the majority of this huge zine is less engaging, there are moments where I

am touched by the mystical sincerity of a thought or an observation. (JB)
Brandt Schmitz / PO Box 260 / Corvallis, OR 97339

NOF-NOF #2 / $2
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 56 pgs
This issue, charmingly titled, "So how come it took so long to get acquainted?" expands on the format of the first with short reflections—written in the first-person in believably different voices and attributed to different fictional characters—matched with careful line drawings of unknown persons. Each of these pieces feels like a transcribed interview with a random stranger, unvoiced questions leading them to contemplate the correspondence of teeth with love, a life lived in a dream with fingerless gloves, lessons possibly learned through gaming, the static moment between crisis and closure, and more. There are some startling insights nestled in these pieces, arising from the contemplation of seemingly ordinary things. A wonderful, thoughtful exercise. (MN)
Nof-Nof / 19 Gordon St. / Providence, RI 02906

OAKSLANDER #1 / $4
8.5 x 7.5 - offset - 40 pgs
Like most San Franciscans without cars, Oakland and its environs often remains a mystery to me. It's not a matter of cultural elitism or any anti-Jerry Brown sentiment, just that I don't have the means or wherewithal to explore its forgotten corners and lift rocks looking for exciting things to do and people to meet. *Oakslander* is a mag by Oaklandites that sings the praises of their fair city and exposes some of the rusty charm hidden by layers of road ash and smog; it's got charm, wit, verve, and fortunately has precious little to do with wilting mohawks or this week's latest grind phenomenon. The premiere issue features the Lake Merritt Monster, Hidden Stairways in and around the East Bay, East Bay action figures (of Patty Hearst, Huey Newton, Bruce Lee, and the Feds), tags, rags, late-night dining, and "Afro Futurism." I'm interested in where and how this mag develops and what it turns into: there's certainly enough *there there* to fill a couple decades worth of issues. (JH)
PO Box 3635 / Oakland, CA 94609
www.nonchalance.org

OX FANZINE #49 / $7
11 x 8 - printed - 156 pgs - German
Man, has this zine gone through changes during the punk ages. It has gone from a newspaper format into a book format. Nevertheless, it is still a punk rock zine with tons of the latest shit spewing from the worldwide scene. This issue includes plenty of columns, band interviews, ads, and record reviews. Plus, the damn thing comes with a CD sampler featuring 30 bands. Get this zine and you will become a punk expert, hurrah! (HH)
PO Box 102225 / 42766 Haan / Germany
www.ox-fanzine.de

PARIAH #4 / 2 stamps
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 44 pages
Political high school zine done by a bunch of punk guys. I found it endearing, though definitely geared towards high school kids. Different writers deal with the upcoming war on Iraq, homophobia, honesty, labels, the arms race, consumerism, and much more. Also contains an amusing straight edge column ("Straight Edge is a more political offshoot of the youth rebellion movement." Oh, really?) that I could write a whole essay on if I lost my self-control. Recommended for other high school kids. (GZ)
Dan Shea / 201 S Ashland / La Grange, IL 60525

PLASTIC BOMB #42 / $7
11 x 8 - printed - 124 pgs - German
Another one from the "best zines around" category. This issue includes interviews with Boys Set Fire, the Fartz, Disorder, Los Dolares, Weird System Records, and plenty more. Also includes lots and lots of ads and record reviews. It also comes with a catalog and a CD sampler featuring 26 bands. Definitely a zine to read if you can relate to the German language. Thanks for putting this monster out. Oh yeah, a *Plastic Bomb* reminder—war is for assholes! (HH)
Postfach 100205 / 47002 Duisburg / Germany
www.plastic-bomb.de

SCANNER #13 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 88 pgs
Predominately a music based zine, *Scanner* has branched out to encompass other creative efforts in the scene, because as editor Stevie B. says, "Most band interviews are bloody boring!" Besides interviews with Exene's new band Original Sinners (seems that she's in every zine these days) and Avail, there are in-depth (and actually interesting) interviews with artist Winston Smith, zinester Al Quint, and author Charles Romalotti. Plus, you know, columns about how fucked our current world is, and a slew of reviews. (SD)
Scanner / 6 Chatsworth Dr / Rushmere Park / Ipswich, Suffolk / IP4 5XA UK

SHORT, FAST & LOUD #9 / $3
8.5 x 11 - printed - 96 pgs
An interactive print publication: the

moment my hands made first contact with *Short, Fast & Loud's* cover, my fingers were coated with toner dust, the whorls of my fingerprints taking on ghost images of letters to the editor, scene reports, and photographs of punksters jumping from stages. It might have been more efficient to print in white ink on black paper (think about it!) given the murk of this issue: but I digress. This mag's a thick and weighty divot of some hardcore and some rock 'n' roll and some heavy sounds and words on such matters: features Boxed In, Cold Sweat, a career-spanning retrospective of San Joaquin Valley institutions Capitol Punishment, Pandemonium, and loads of grub and grime. Good reading provided by a full cast of characters…watch as the trend toward global hardcorization continues unabated. (JH)
225 Lincoln Ave / Cotati, CA 94931
akautsch@aol.com

DER SLAMBANG #5 / free send stamps
8 x 6 - copied - 4 pgs - German
Well, the zine is in German, except for a hearty "Fuck off USA!" paragraph that is written in English. We stupid Americans deserve every word of this rant. Oh well, we would just add postwar Germany to our list of lands to be bombed, except we need our BMWs and Mercedes-Benzs. This small zine is mostly record reviews and film musical reviews. Plus there are some jokes at the end. Interesting zine—I wonder what it will evolve into? (HH)
Henrik Zenker Ruepper Str 104 / 76137 Karlsruhe / Germany
Hzenker@hotmail.com

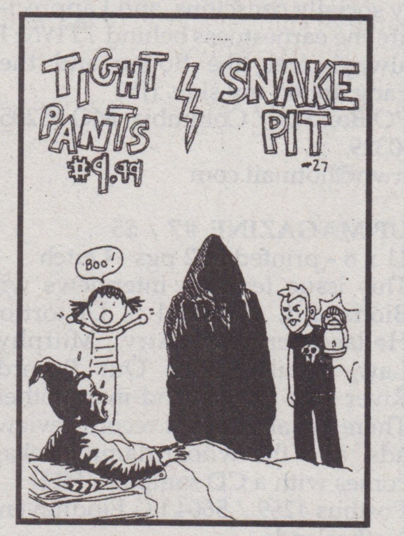
SLUG & LETTUCE #74 / postage
14 x 11.5 - printed - 20 pgs
I feel a great happiness knowing that *Slug & Lettuce,* a mainstay in the world of zines, continues to not only churn out issue after issue, but to improve with every one. I've always enjoyed the introduction by (Chris)tine, and now the columns are just as good. This issue has the standard *S&L* fare: columns and reviews, all of them actually worth reading. (CR)
PO Box 26632 / Richmond, VA 23261-6632

STIFF JAW #1 / $10
7 x 8.5 - copied - 122 pgs
Boy sees girl on bus, boys talks to girl, girl comes to a show at boy's punk house, boy gets nervous, then girl leaves. See, the illustrations in *Stiff Jaw* are great: a stylish oozing depiction of a Portland punk house complete with traditional puke, booze, and mohawks. The text, dialog, and story is thin, but readable. But my real beef is the price: ten bucks, come on! (SD)
Philip Knowles / 12780 E 2200 St / Atkinson, IL 61235

3RD GENERATION NATION #24 / $5
11 x 8 - printed - 72 pgs - German
So hot off the presses the ink is not yet dry! Fabulous punk rock zine from Germany, this issue dedicated to Joe Strummer. Included inside are interviews with the Skulls, Broken Bottles, Dream Dates, Put-ons, Revolvers, Napalm Stars, and the Fuses. There are loads and loads of gig reviews, plenty of record reviews, and lots of worthless gossip. One of the best zines around! (HH)
Ralf Huenebeck / Grenzweg 66 / 47877 Willich / Germany
3rdgenerationnation.de

TIGHT PANTS #9.99 / **SNAKE PIT** #27 / $1
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 24 pgs
I love *Tight Pants* more than any other zine. *Snake Pit* I had never read before, but now, thanks to Maddy, I've been introduced to another great zine. Ahh…a split that actually works! In case you're unfamiliar with either zine, both are filled with incredibly well drawn pictures illustrating the perils, pitfalls, and triumphs of punk rock alcohol drinking and partying. The two writers presents a short comic strip detailing the remarkably mundane days of their lives. It's cute and fun, but not disposable like a lot of comics. Keep 'em coming! (CR)
Maddy / 296 A Nassau Ave #3L / Brooklyn, NY 11222
Ben / PO Box 49447 / Austin, TX 78765

TROUBLE IN MIND #4 / $1 and 2 stamps or trade
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 24 pgs
Erik warns that this issue of the zine (formerly known as *Smash Action*) is about "pain, turmoil, mortality, and misdirection…and finding direction." In a series of thoughtful entries (many accompanied by terse, tightly-boxed ink drawings) he addresses his father's sudden death from heart failure, "taking down a big inflatable moonwalk at some kid's party, his latest in a long string of shit jobs." As the course of the zine follows the emotional map ("pain, turmoil…") through the wake, a roadtrip, letters to the dead, protests, punk rock, and politics, Erik provides insight into an intensely personal journey which turns outward in a passionate engagement with the world. It is a believable and moving progression, and well worth tracking. The next



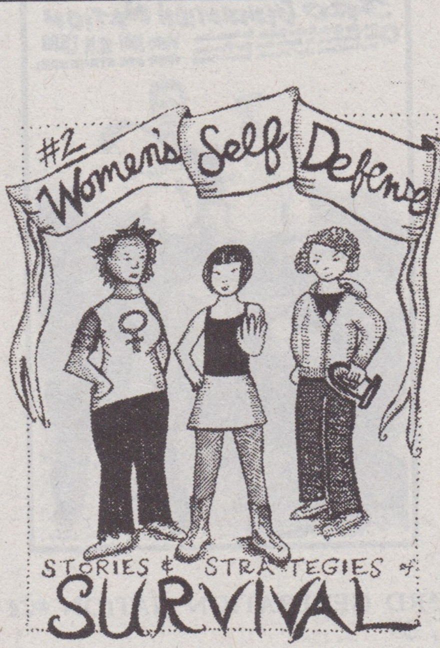
issue promises to address the prevailing aesthetics of radical art and what it means to preach to the converted, so I'll be looking for this in the future. (MN)
Erik / PO Box 44254 / Detroit, MI 48244
rustriot@yahoo.com

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL
#61 / $1 and 3 stamps, or trade
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 56 pgs
Dear lord, eleven years of publication! This long-time staple of the zine world pulls no surprises (or punches) with its usual mix of reviews (records, live shows, and zines), photographs, not-too-in-depth band interviews, and a smattering of sociopolitical commentary. This issue includes the Dolomites, Pansy Division, Mooney Suzuki, Xiu Xiu, the Plus Ones, and lots more. There are some heartfelt editorials about the upcoming elections, the coming war with Iraq, the an analysis of the media response to Trent Lott's Southern segregationist slip. (MN)
PO Box 329 / Columbia, MO 65205-0329

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL
#62 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 48 pgs
Anything with Exene on the cover will automatically garner my interest! This issue interviews her newest band, Original Sinners, as well as Tora Tora Torrance, Plan-It-X Records, and the usual music reviews and heads up on current political issues. This time there was a column pointing out that there is currently legislation to reinstate the military draft—news that affects all of us. The voice of this zine is really socially conscious, and I appreciate the earnestness behind *TTWN*; I always feel like Boone and the gang are on my side. (JB)
PO Box 329 / Columbia, MO 65205 -0329
ttwn@hotmail.com

UP MAGAZINE #7 / $5
11 x 8 - printed - 52 pgs - Dutch
This issue features interviews with Biohazard, Social Distortion, Hellacopters, Ministry, Murphy's Law, Avail, Knock Out Records, River City Rebels, and many others. There are also lots of record reviews, ads, and the whole damn package comes with a CD sampler. (HH)
Postbus 4269 / 5604 EG Eindhoven / Netherlands

WILD HOG RIDE #1 / $2-3 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 68 pgs
While trying to find my way back to *MRR* sans my trusty SF walking tour guide Sara, I discovered that I can read while walking, and that my navigational abilities are increased when my nose is buried in a zine. A mad bonus to the rather mesmerizing read that *WHR* provided me. While I am certain that I disagree with almost everything in this zine (especially the attitude), it held my attention through its sheer ridiculousness. Stories about broken cars, constant referral to an ex-band's activities (while still trying to sound unimpressed), your average record reviews and band interviews (Hexxed, No Less My Life, W.O.R.M., and Madge); all laced with a sense of "you don't care but I'm going to tell you anyway." It all came down to the Irishness of the editor's voice holding my interest more than anything else. Is that bad? (JB)
418 Doagh Rd / Newtownabbey / County Antrim / BT36 6AN / Northern Ireland
Less_than_aaron@hotmail.com



WOMEN'S SELF DEFENSE #2 / $3
7 x 8.5 - copied - 72 pgs
A nice successor to the first issue, this zine covers a wide spectrum of issues related to the title: personal experiences with abuse and harassment, techniques for self defense and survival tips, and networking information. Both depressing and inspiring, with great layout, it's also excellent reading. For lack of a better word, it's empowering, and a must-read. (MD)
Ariel / PO Box 2433 / Champaign, IL 61825
mspippilotta@yahoo.com

THE WORLD OUTSIDE #8 / $1 or trade
News clippings that "missed the front page," corrections to the bad grammar and mistakes in pro-literacy press releases, draught tips, examining unemployment stats, and thoughts on not having a watch make up most of this well-written zine. Of particular note is the article on putting the Beltway Snipers (there's a band name waiting to happen) into perspective. I'm not saying that I buy the idea that two weeks of Pennsylvania's deer season causing more gunshot injuries makes them equal, but it's worth reading. (GZ)
2121 19th St N / Arlington, VA 22201
normrat@hotmail.com

X.P.ERIMENTAR #3 & 4 / $1 or trade
6.5 x 8.75 - printed - 44 pgs each
Punk rock and punk politics from Ecuador. Xavier, the editor, is not so worried about presentation, he says: "El contenido lo es todo..." But I really like the delivery, too—it's efficient but not clinical, with lots of well-spaced text and enough graphics to break it up. I really like the paper, too—a thin newsprint that apple green in #4. In #3 Xavier interviews a handful of South American bands who might not have showed up on your radar: Distorción Social from Ecuador, Generacion Perdida from Perú, and more, plus articles/columns on music and racism, sports, and violence, and reviews with a special lean toward South and Central American output. Issue #4 is heavier on the opinion pieces, with discussions on Marxism/Leninism as well as a document of a serious battle against McDonalds. This is pretty great. Xavier also does a distro of the same name; you may want to ask him to include a list and send more than $1 for postage. (AC)
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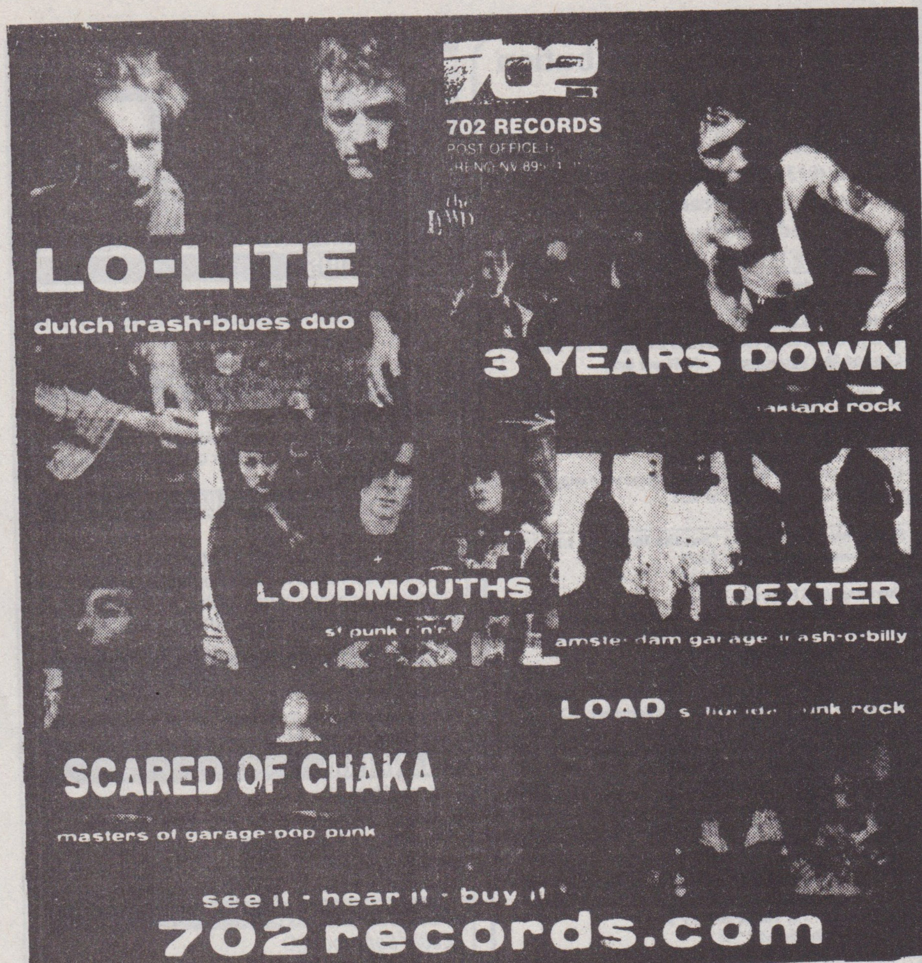

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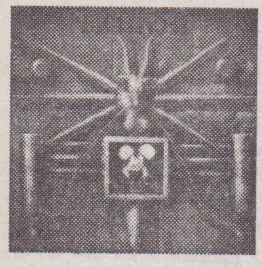

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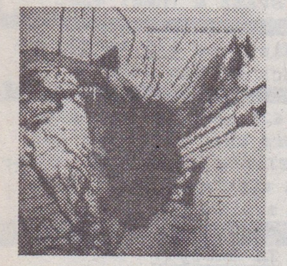

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Featuring: I REFUSE IT!, PUTRID FEVER, CHEETAH CHROME MOTHERFUCKERS, STATO DI POLIZIA (SDP GR), TRAUMATIC, JUGGERNAUT, and WARDOGS. 40 minutes of raging Italian Hardcore circa 1983. Also comes with an insert booklet jammed full of lyrics, logos, rare photos, etc. Cover art by Mr. Winston Smith (Dead Kennedy's). This is a one time only pressing of 1000 LPs, 200 colored available thru mailorder only. The cd version won't be available until late fall/winter. from cassette #16 - Senza Tregua.
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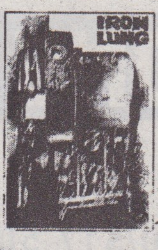

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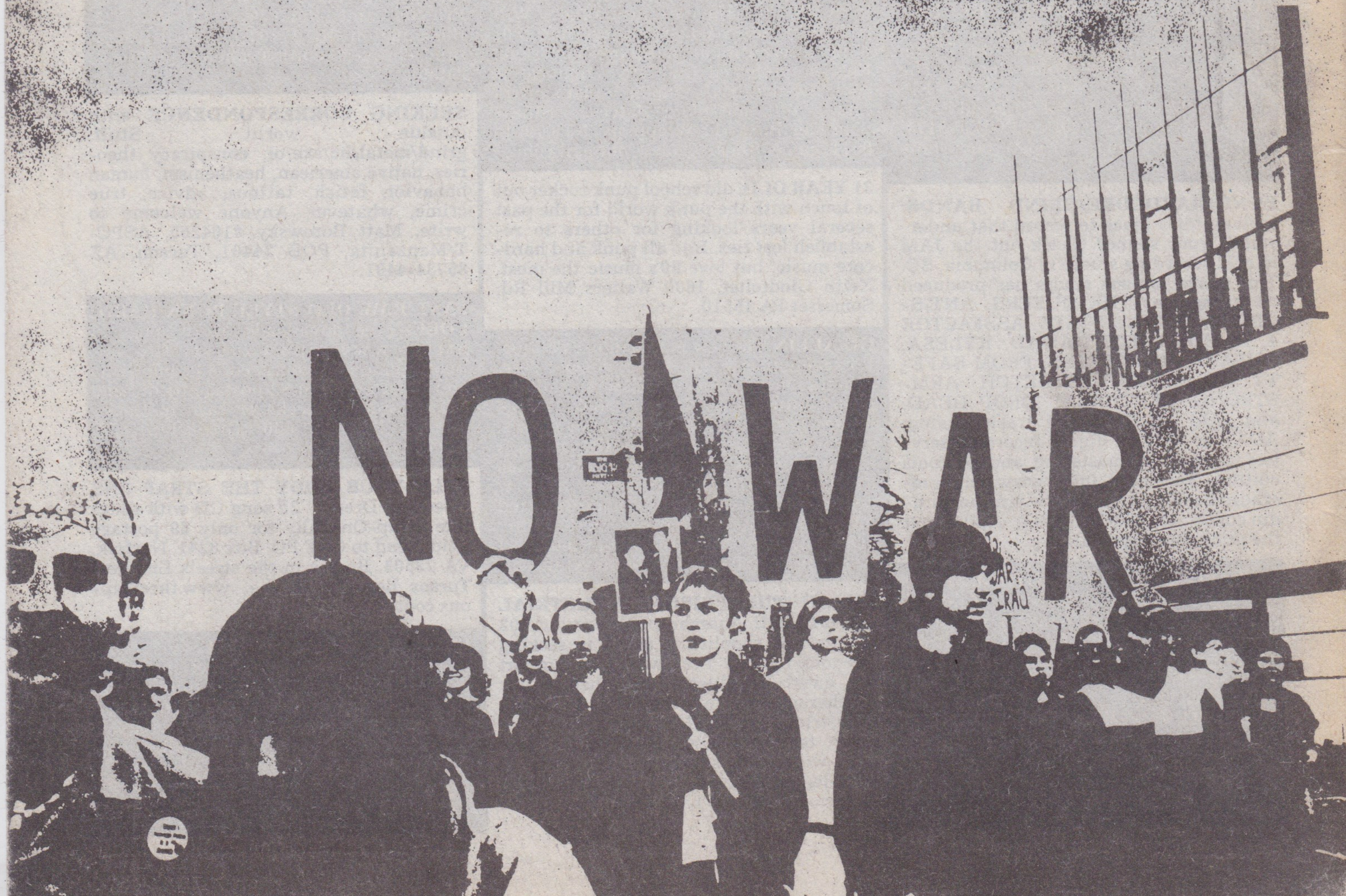
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